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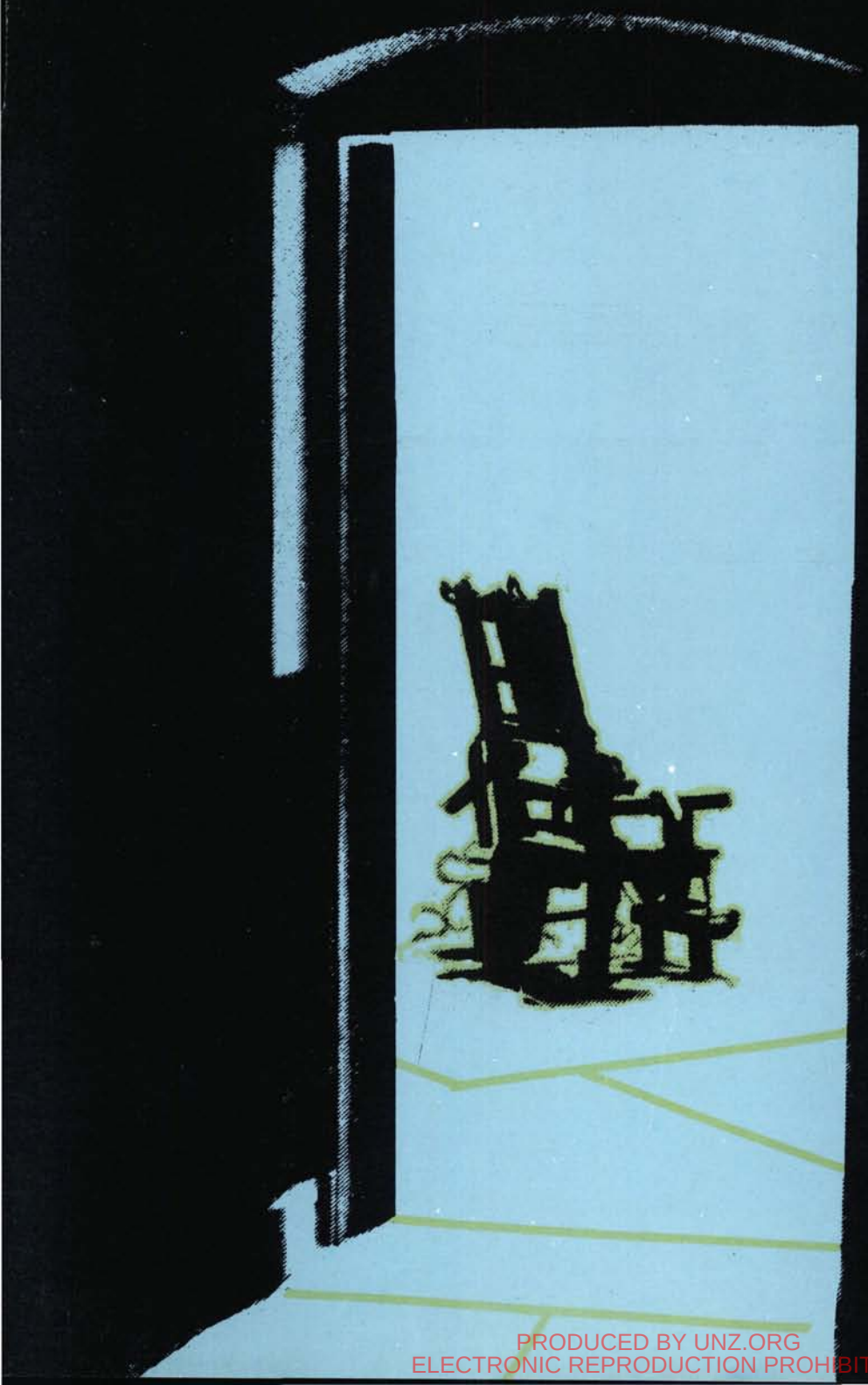

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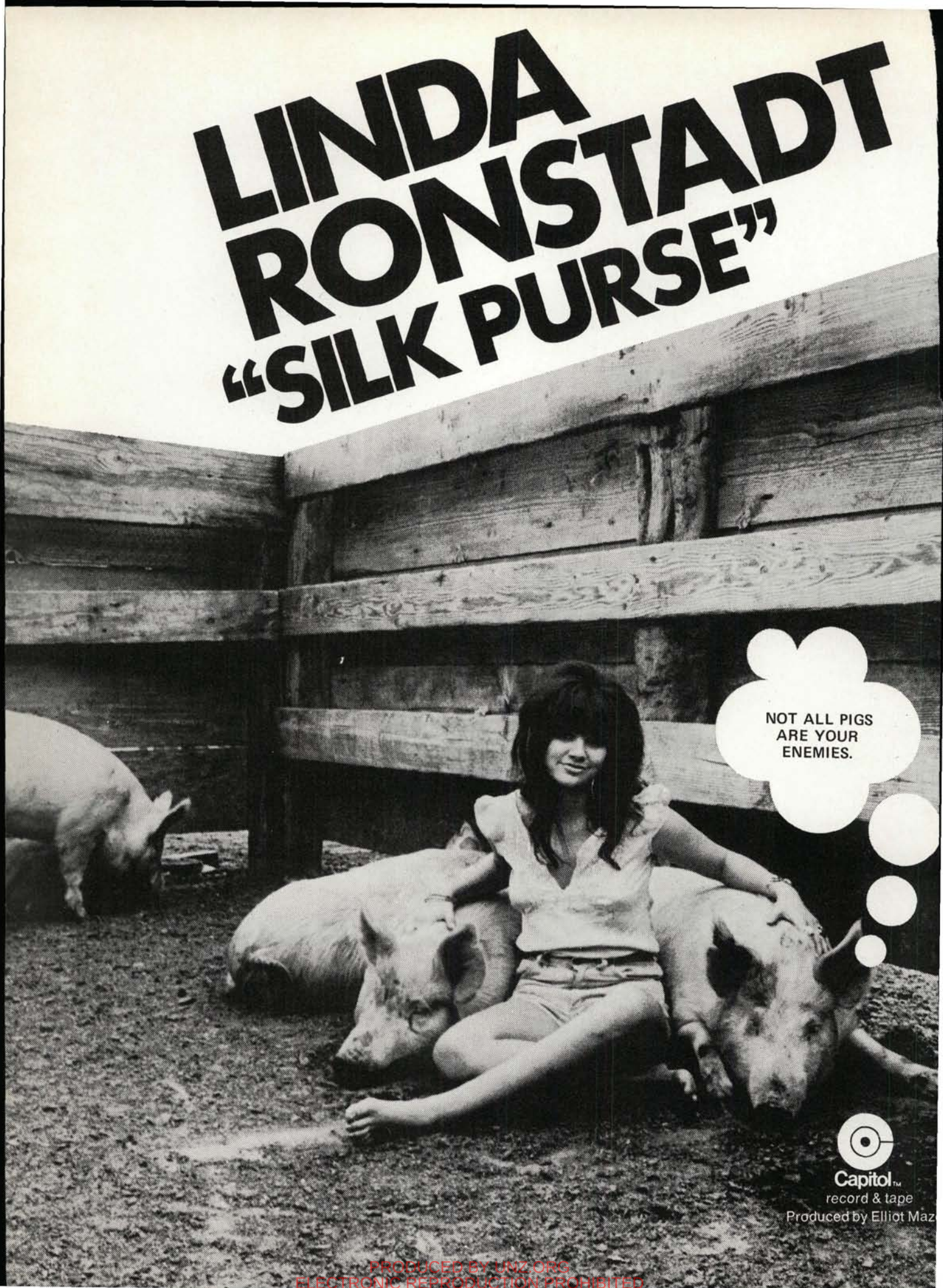

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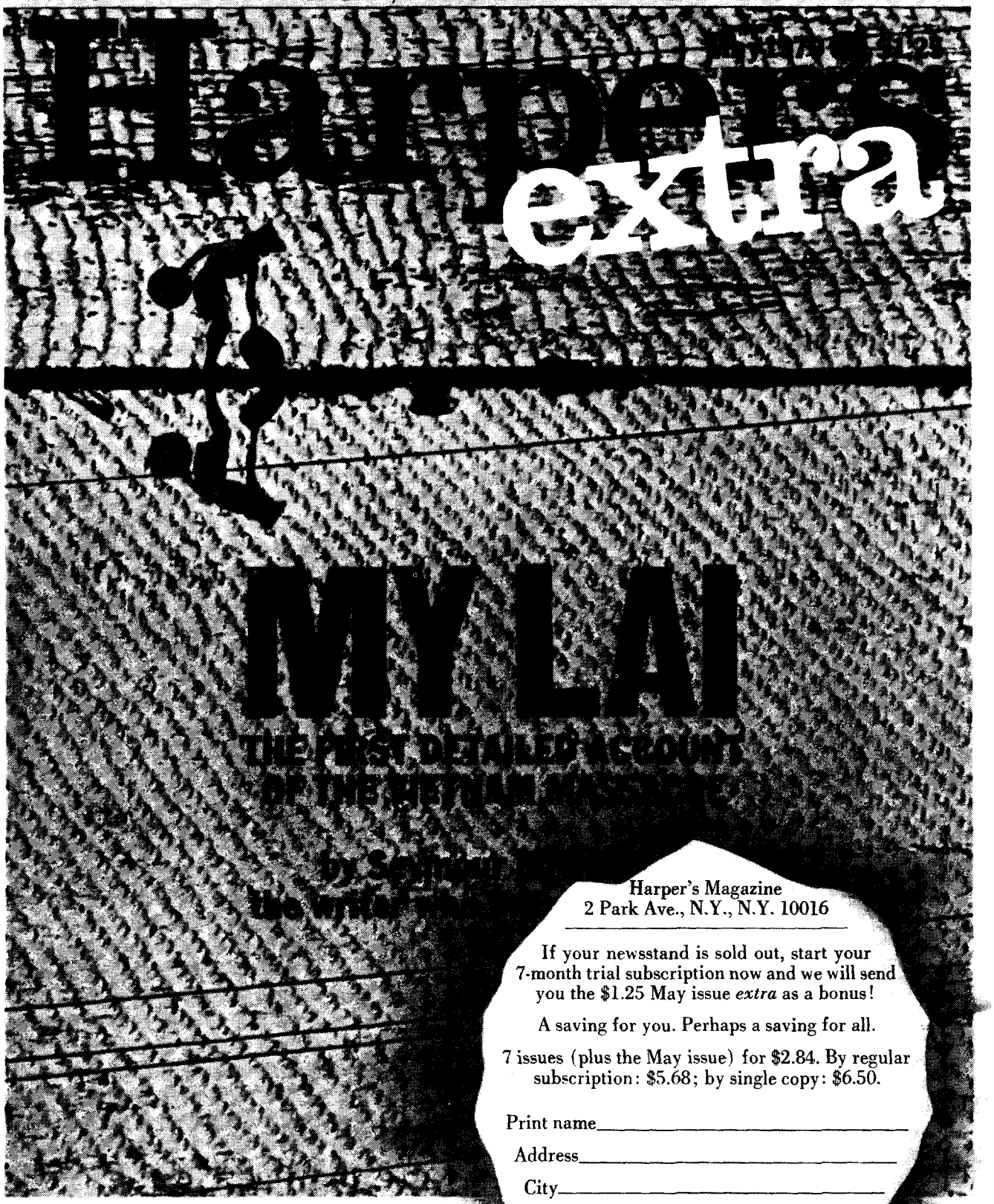

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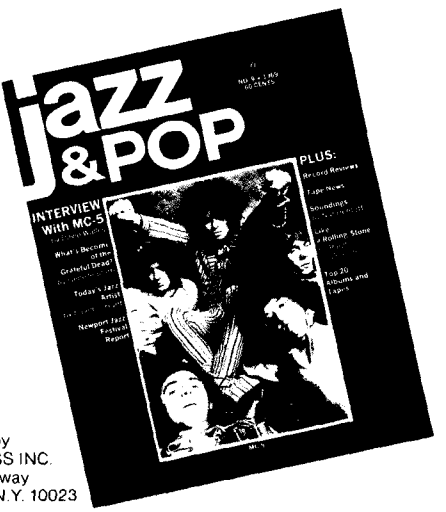

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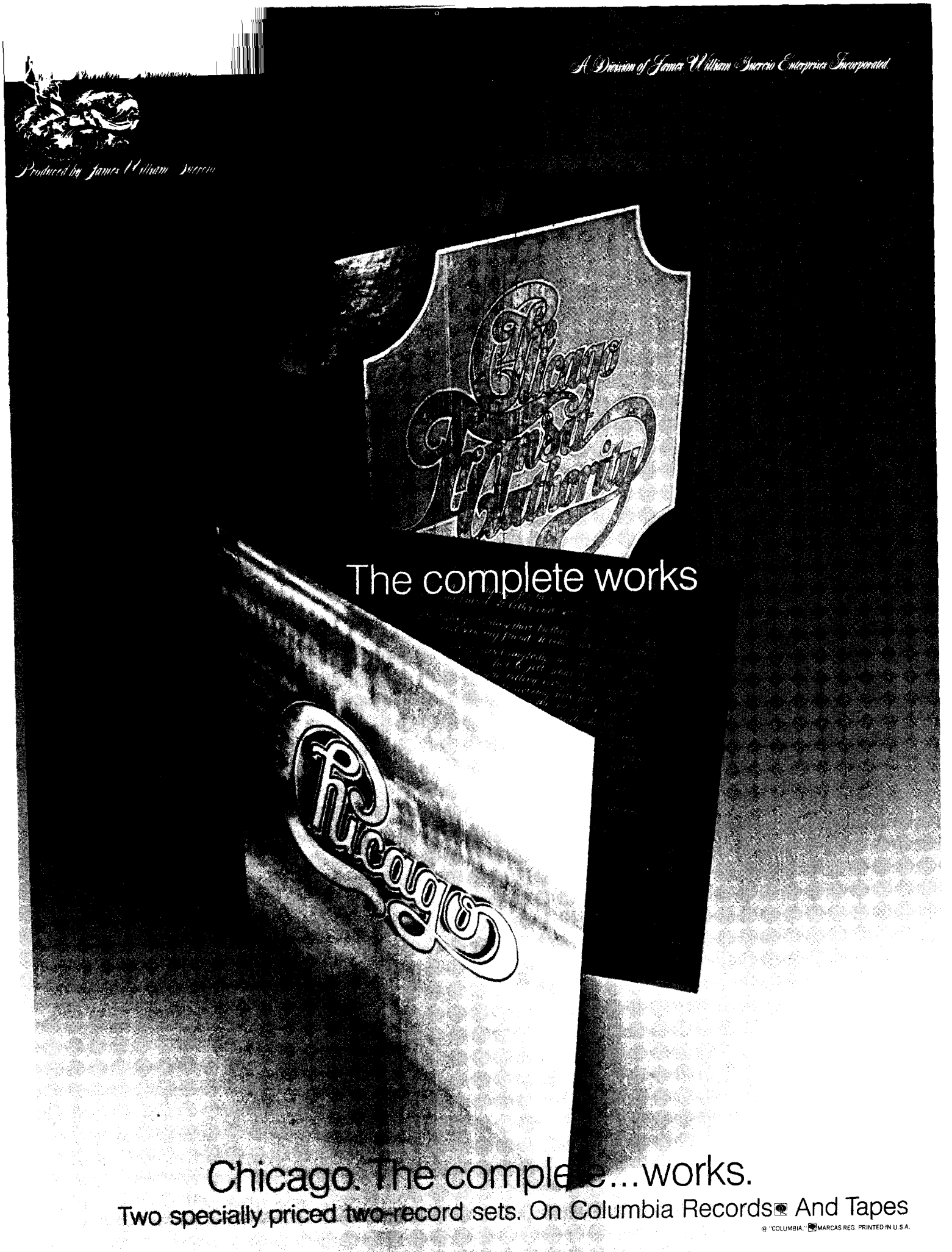
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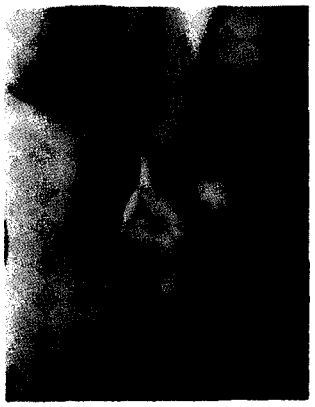
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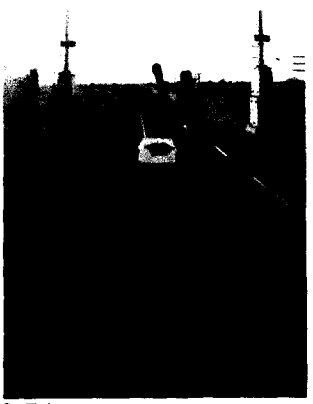
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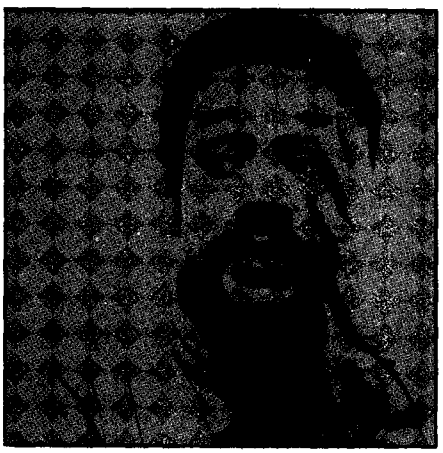
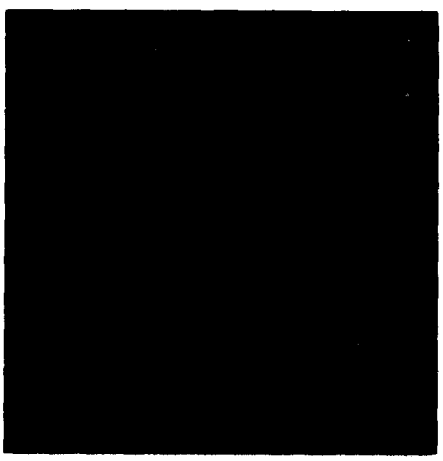
[Page 13] Women and Marcusism



[Page 17] Bobby Seale's Own Story

[Page 33] Black Experience



[Page 36] Vietnamization of Laos

Herein:

DePugh and The Minutemen: Wonderland of the Mind — 10
by William Turner

Women and the Myth of Consumerism — 13
by Ellen Willis

Seize the Time — 17
by Bobby Seale

Here and Now for Bobby Seale — 30
by Jean Genet

The Black Experience in Color — 33
by William Henderson

The Vietnamization of Laos — 36
by Banning Garrett

Off the Pill? — 46
by Judith Coburn

Puerto Rico: Our Backyard Colony — 50
by Michael Meyerson

Back of the Book: — 52
The Presidio 27
The Liberation Music Orchestra
Letters to the Editor

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VOL. 8, NO. 12 JUNE 1970

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Dear Andy Wickham,

I was very happy to receive the advance copy of Ed Sanders' new masterpieces in the mail last week. Ed sent me the demo tapes of the same session earlier this year, when I was still out on the street, and I'm really happy to hear that they will be released as he had hoped, under the name of Sanders' Truckstop. I remember one tune called P-L-A-S-T-E-R that was really great, and the Johnny Pissoff song is right on too. Ed's Belle of Avenue A I have here in my cell with me and I play it to cheer me up almost every day.

You mention in your cover letter that you are planning some "intelligent advertising" for this record--your best bet would be to have Ed write copy himself, as he is one of the greatest writers this weirdo country has ever produced. I've known Ed for some time--we read together four years ago at the Berkely Poetry Conference in 1965--and I love everything he does. If anybody will check it out he will find that Sanders invented the underground in America and has charged it with his high-energy post-honko language since the early 60's, ever since he left his home in Kansas City for the wilds of the lower east side. I'm just now working on a piece on the importance of the Fugs based on the last album, The Belle of Avenue A, and I hope this new record featuring Ed's dope-a-billy chants will get out to a lot of people. They need it.

I really appreciate your sending me the dub and I hope you will be able to send me a copy of the album when it's ready for release. Also if you could send me any other Reprise/Warner Bros. records that I might like you would be doing me a great service. I'd especially like to have the Fugs' first Warner Bros. release, Jimi Hendrix's Smash Hits and Are You Experienced, and the first Grateful Dead record if that could possibly be arranged.

Ok, thanks again, and stick with Ed as long as you can--the brother is really righteous!

Long Live Rock and roll, dope, & fucking in the streets, as Ed has always said!

Yours,

John Sinclair

John Sinclair, Prisoner of War/Pig Nation
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The Latest Ed Sanders Masterpiece Mentioned Here Is "Sanders' Truckstop," On Reprise.

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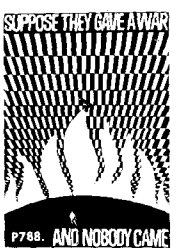

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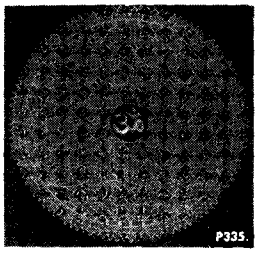
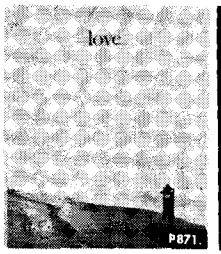

P335.

P428.

P219.

P414.


P871.

P474.

UP AGAINST THE WALL.... MARBORO

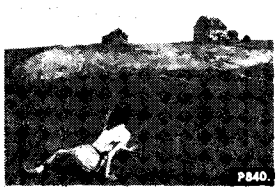
P292.

P363.

P304.

P369.

P339.

P447.

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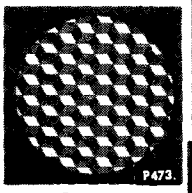
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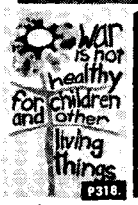
P858.


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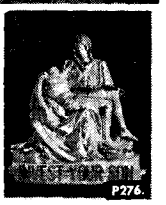
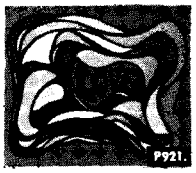
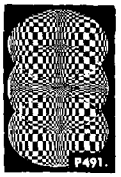

P276.

P921.

P113.

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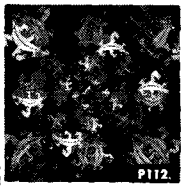
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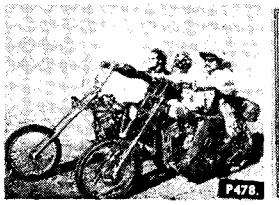
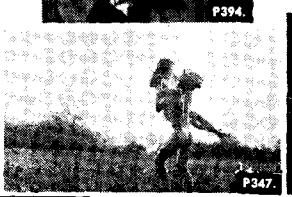

P478.

P190.

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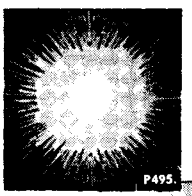
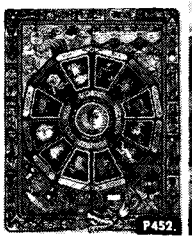

P495.

P338.

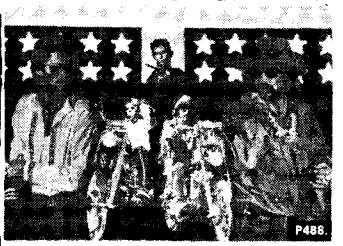
P438.

P452.

P872.

P441.

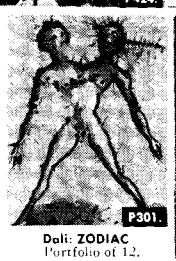
P835.

P424.

P497.

P488.

P462.

P468.

P458.

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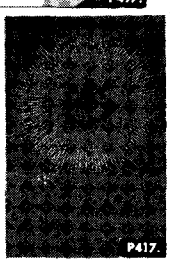

P417.

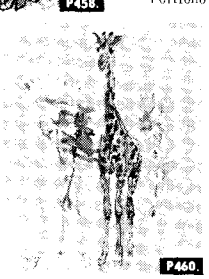
P500.

P415.

P456.

P470.

P830.

P466.

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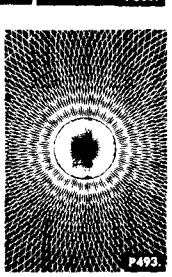
P493.

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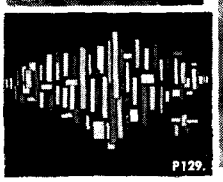

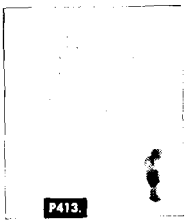

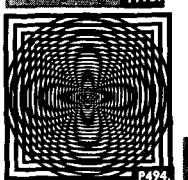

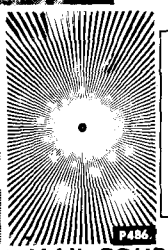

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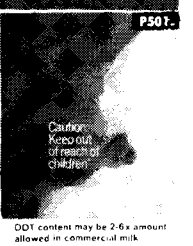

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DePugh and the Minutemen: Wonderland of the Mind

ROBERT BOLIVAR DE PUGH apparently possesses that special staying power of a man obsessed, in his case with the omnipresences of Communism and Socialism. DePugh is the national coordinator and founding father of the Minutemen, paramilitary organization of the ultra-right. But over the past three years, the title seems to have become more titular than real. Not that the Minutemen are withering away; if anything they have become stronger. But an internal power struggle—the opposition consisting of those who consider him too tame—evidently has robbed DePugh of much of his authority.

I first met DePugh in 1966 while researching an article on the Minutemen (RAMPARTS, January 1967). We had conversed in the cluttered office of Biolabs Inc., his family-run veterinary medicine firm located in Norborne, a dot on the rich and rolling farmtable of northwest Missouri. DePugh, a ruggedly handsome man in his mid-forties with intent dark eyes and receding black hair, was calm and businesslike as he talked about the Minutemen and their manifesto. He observed that the country had, for all practical purposes, gone Communist during Franklin Roosevelt's second term, and that only revolutionary, not political means, could reclaim it.

NOW, THREE YEARS LATER, he looked much as he had before, although his changed circumstances showed how much water had passed under the bridge. This time I interviewed DePugh in a holding cell in the U.S. Marshal's office in Kansas City, where he had been brought from Leavenworth Penitentiary to stand trial for having jumped bail. The charge stemmed from his having gone underground for a year and a half, during which time he roamed the western United States disguised in the improbable garb of a hippie and sent off "Underground News Bulletins" to the media. I was in Kansas City, having been subpoenaed as a defense witness in the case. Also in the cell were his two attorneys, one from Legal Aid—DePugh had claimed indigent defendant status—and the other a volunteer with a professional interest in the legal issues raised.

For all his wild rhetoric, DePugh rarely has been known to lose his cool, and he hadn't lost it now. He outlined for me the technical defense he and his attorneys were considering for the trial, due to get under way the next morning. Very simply, he said, he had skipped bail because of fear for his life. There were indications, he explained, that an opposing element of the radical right had marked him for death, and there had been no point in going to the FBI for protection because the FBI was in cahoots with this very element. It was clear that DePugh was alluding to a Minutemen splinter group that he had earlier described as a "Nazi clique."

DePugh had first brought up the existence of this clique when I telephoned him in October of 1967, a call which had been prompted by his public statement that "When fascism comes to the United States it will come in the guise of anti-Communism." The full statement seemed not only to confirm DePugh's known antipathy toward the American Nazi Party of George Lincoln Rockwell, but to bolster suspicions of a deep rift between DePugh and factions of his own organization. On the urging of New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison, I made the call and posed the possibility that renegade Minutemen had been involved in the Kennedy assassination. DePugh readily agreed, saying that he had some evidence that might explain unanswered questions about events at Dealey Plaza in Dallas. It was only a few months after this exploratory contact on the topic of the assassination that the chief Minuteman had gone underground.

Pacing back and forth in the cell, DePugh said that Garrison had also been subpoenaed but had balked at appearing, on the grounds of a recent back operation. DePugh explained Garrison's role in his case: "When I talked with Jim on the phone [in October 1967], he told me about the mysterious deaths of a number of figures in his investigation." Among those whose deaths had been listed by Garrison were three men who by DePugh's admission were members of the Minutemen.

It was hoped that I would testify to the brief telephone discussion on the assassination in 1967 as well as enumerate the strange deaths. In addition, DePugh was a bit paranoid on the subject of FBI harassment and surveillance, and was convinced that agents had burglarized records in his Richmond, Missouri, facility. Could I attest, on the basis of my own experience, that such tactics were in fact regularly employed by the Bureau? During the discussion, one of the attorneys was summoned outside to answer a telephone call. "I ran into an FBI agent in the corridor," he mentioned later. "He said he'd give anything to hear what was going on in here."

If DePugh's fears about the FBI were slightly overwrought, his concern about Minutemen spin-off factions was not. One bit of extraneous matter which had been dredged up by the Garrison probe was the existence of a paramilitary cell in New Orleans whose leader, a retired Army officer, claimed to be "national commander" of the Minutemen. And in Los Angeles and Orange County, California, there is a clique that privately calls itself the "Real Minutemen." Some of DePugh's former members are literally Nazis, having gone over to the American Nazi Party (ANP). Wasn't the ANP a gross burlesque, I asked him? "Not at all," he replied, naming a prominent Texas oil millionaire as its chief financier. "It has the best underground in the right wing."

THE SCHISM BETWEEN Nazis and Minutemen is based at least in part on ideological differences. To DePugh and his loyalists, the primary enemy is Washington, the seat of power of an increasingly large central bureaucracy. DePugh once stated on a radio

by William Turner

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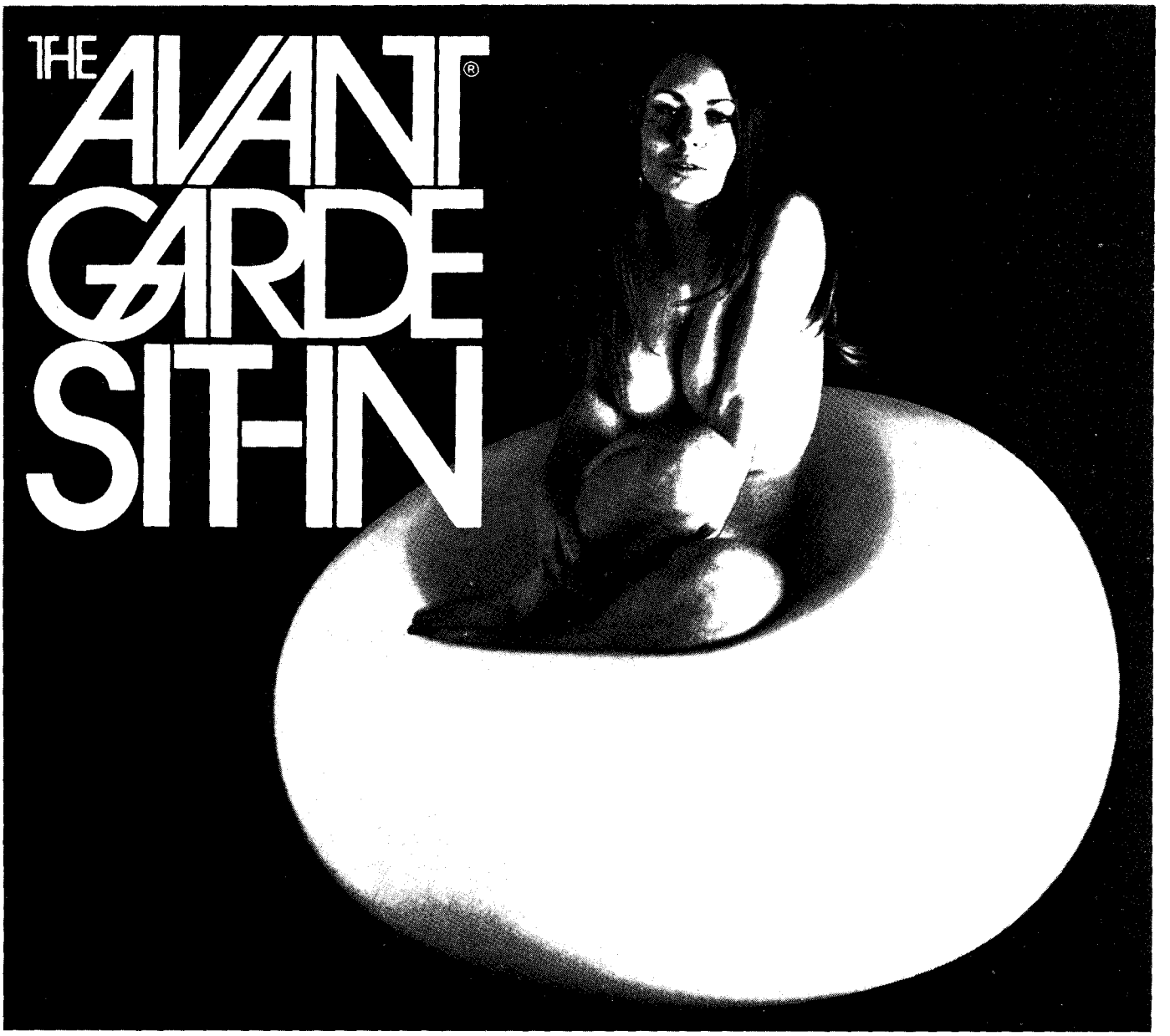

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program, for example, that "the Liberal-Communist-Socialist conspiracy that now effectively controls our federal government will pass any laws that they have to, to effectively silence opposition to the present bureaucracy, regardless of what form it will take." The Nazis, on the other hand, see Moscow, rather than Washington, as the devil incarnate.

The practical effect of this clash in ideologies is illustrated in the relationships which several right-wing factions have with government agencies. For example, DePugh and his partisans are bitterly hostile toward the FBI and CIA—one follower flatly declared that J. Edgar Hoover is a figurehead for "the real head of the FBI, who is a Jew." By the same token, evidence exists that their opposition readily cooperates with the FBI and other government intelligence agencies. A "Real Minuteman" who served in an intelligence arm during World War II remarked not long ago that he was in the employ of the FBI and (improbably) had its protection. Guy Banister, the putative Minuteman who worked closely with American Nazi Party members in New Orleans, was a former FBI official who sent a steady stream of material on "subversives" to the local Bureau office. Banister's associate in a cover organization, the Anti-Communism League of the Caribbean, was Maurice Gatlin, who also was Nazi chief George Lincoln Rockwell's attorney in the Louisiana area. Rockwell himself made no secret of his good relations with the FBI. "J. Edgar Hoover is our kind of people," he once asserted. "He talks like a pink, but when he acts, he acts like a white man."

As a result of the antipathy between the two right-wing groups, DePugh and Rockwell were constantly infiltrating and counter-infiltrating one another's organization. In the course of the jail interview DePugh disclosed with an ironic sigh that Pratler, the ANP lieutenant who has been charged with assassinating Rockwell, had also belonged to the Minutemen.

THERE IS ADEQUATE EVIDENCE TO support DePugh's contention that he did not go underground with the specific intent of jumping bail. The substantive charge on which he had been convicted (in November 1966) was conspiracy to violate the National Firearms Act, to wit, the possession of a somewhat battered machine gun. His attorney for that case would testify that he had counseled DePugh to keep in touch because the conviction would not stand—and indeed it was toppled on appeal.

There remain two principal theories as to why he fled. One is the fear of assassination from the right—a possibility that should not be overlooked. Garrison's inquiry into the past of alleged assassin Lee Harvey Oswald, for example, led investigators to pro-Nazi Party right-wingers in New Orleans—among them Guy Banister. Another piquant ingredient has been added to the mystery by a sometime employee of Guy Banister's New Orleans detective agency. While DePugh was in a fugitive status, this man approached a highly reliable reporter and played a tape purporting to be a telephone conversation between himself and a right-winger in Denver. "We don't want DePugh and Peyson [a DePugh sidekick] to come back," the Denver party had said, offering $7500 each to make sure they didn't. When the New Orleans man balked at murder, the proposal switched to fingering the pair for $1500.

The second theory is that DePugh fled to avoid being arrested on a bank robbery conspiracy charge. In January 1968 an informer revealed to police that seven Seattle men were plotting to rob three banks to help finance their Minutemen operations. The group was nabbed supposedly just before they were to carry out the robberies, and five of the seven were subsequently indicted. Also plugged into the crime were DePugh and his companion, Walter Peyson, who were in Missouri at the time. Only days before the indictments were returned, the pair had dropped from sight, and it took the FBI a year and a half to find them. On a tip from a local sheriff, agents closed in on a desert hideout near Truth or Consequences, New Mexico, bagging not only DePugh and Peyson but a large cache of weapons.

In our conversation in jail, DePugh insisted that none of the named "co-conspirators" was a member of *his* Minutemen, and that none had ever been.

DE PUGH HAD BROUGHT QUITE A contingent of witnesses to Kansas City to testify in his behalf. Among them was Rev. Kenneth Goff, an ex-Communist who switched to Gerald L. K. Smith and now runs a Bible-thumping paramilitary band in Colorado, the Soldiers of the Cross ("We only teach self defense," the fragile-looking Goff insisted). Another was Glenn Jackson of Southern California, national co-chairman of DePugh's Patriotic Party. (The party is a contradiction, since DePugh has held that political means at this point are futile.) Still another was Ralph DePugh, his father, who had been gassed in World War I ("Forty thousand boys killed in Vietnam. We ought to bring them all home—the Communists have been running wild in this country since the Kennedy administration"). And there was the toothpick-chewing sheriff of DePugh's home county.

But in the end, DePugh's lawyers decided not to use the defense of fear of bodily harm. The judge wrapped it up for the prosecution during his instructions, offering his opinion that DePugh was guilty as charged. DePugh wrote "sunk" on a slip of paper and handed it to his attorneys. When the judge had finished, the defense put into the record a protest against his "prejudicial remarks." The jury wasn't out long, and the chief Minuteman was handcuffed and led away for the trip to Leavenworth.

One additional item that DePugh told me in the jail seems to symbolize the current turmoil in the paramilitary far right. In May 1967, after being convicted of the firearms violation in Kansas City along with DePugh, the dashing San Diego leader of the Minutemen, Troy Houghton, was freed on appeal bond. He left in his own car and has not been seen since. Some think he went underground. Others are sure he is dead. And a few proto-Minutemen, DePugh complained, were trying to frame him for the "murder" of the missing man.

William Turner is a former FBI agent and author of Hoover's FBI: The Man and the Myth *(Sherbourne Press 1970, $7.50).*

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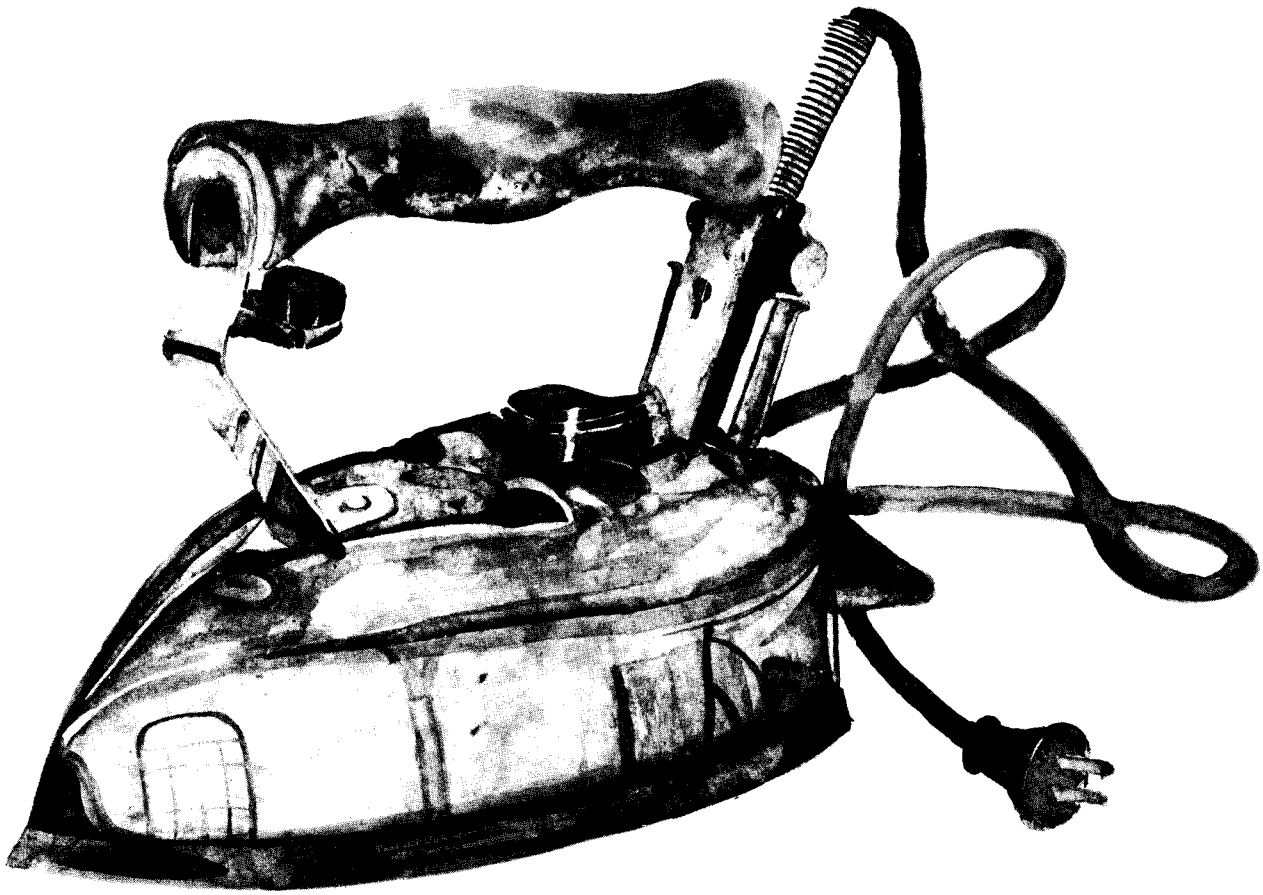

Women and the Myth of Consumerism

Drawing by William T. Wiley

by Ellen Willis

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IF WHITE RADICALS ARE SERIOUS about revolution, they are going to have to discard a lot of bullshit ideology created by and for educated white middle-class males. A good example of what has to go is the popular theory of consumerism.

As expounded by many leftist thinkers, notably Marcuse, this theory maintains that consumers are psychically manipulated by the mass media to crave more and more consumer goods, and thus power an economy that depends on constantly expanding sales. The theory is said to be particularly applicable to women, for women do most of the actual buying, their consumption is often directly related to their oppression (e.g. makeup, soap flakes), and they are a special target of advertisers. According to this view, the society defines women as consumers, and the purpose of the prevailing media image of women as passive sexual objects is to sell products. It follows that the beneficiaries of this depreciation of women are not men but the corporate power structure.

Although the consumerism theory has, in recent years, taken on the invulnerability of religious dogma, like most dogmas its basic function is to defend the interests of its adherents—in this case, the class, sexual and racial privileges of Movement people.

FIRST OF ALL, THERE IS nothing inherently wrong with consumption. Shopping and consuming are enjoyable human activities and the marketplace has been a center of social life for thousands of years. The profit system is oppressive not because relatively trivial luxuries are available, but because basic necessities are not. The locus of the oppression resides in the production function: people have no control over which commodities are produced (or services performed), in what amounts, under what conditions, or how these commodities are distributed. Corporations make these decisions and base them solely on their profit potential. It is more profitable to produce luxuries for the affluent (or for that matter for the poor, on exploitative installment plans) than to produce and make available food, housing, medical care, education, and recreational and cultural facilities according to the needs and desires of the people. We, the consumers, can accept the goods offered to us or we can reject them, but we cannot determine their quality or change the system's priorities.

As it is, the profusion of commodities is a genuine and powerful compensation for oppression. It is a bribe, but like all bribes it offers concrete benefits—in the average American's case, a degree of physical comfort unparalleled in history. Under present conditions, people are preoccupied with consumer goods not because they are brainwashed but because buying is the one pleasurable activity not only permitted but actively encouraged by our rulers. The pleasure of eating an ice cream cone may be minor compared to the pleasure of meaningful, autonomous work, but the former is easily available and the latter is not. A poor family would undoubtedly rather have a decent apartment than a new TV, but since they are unlikely to get the apartment, what is to be gained by not getting the TV?

RADICALS WHO IN GENERAL ARE healthily skeptical of facile Freudian explanations have been quick to embrace this theory of media manipulation based squarely on Freud, as popularized by market researchers and journalists like Vance Packard (Marcuse acknowledges Packard's influence in *One Dimensional Man*). In essence, this theory holds that ads designed to create unconscious associations between merchandise and deep-seated fears, sexual desires, and needs for identity and self-esteem, induce people to buy products in search of gratifications no product can provide. Furthermore, the corporations, through the media, deliberately create fears and desires that their products can claim to fulfill. The implication is that women are not merely taken in by lies or exaggerations—as, say, by the suggestion that a certain perfume will make us sexually irresistible—but are psychically incapable of learning from experience and will continue to buy no matter how often we are disappointed, and that in any case our "need" to be sexually irresistible is programmed into us to keep us buying perfume. This hypothesis of psychic distortion is based on the erroneous assumption that mental health and anti-materialism are synonymous.

Although they have to cope with the gyppery inherent in the profit system, people for the most part buy goods for practical, self-interested reasons. A washing machine does make a housewife's work easier (in the absence of socialization of housework); Excedrin does make a headache go away; a car does provide transportation. If one is duped into buying a product because of misleading advertising, the process is called exploitation; it has nothing to do with brainwashing.

Advertising, in fact, is a how-to manual on the consumer economy, constantly reminding us of what is available and encouraging us to indulge ourselves. It works (that is, stimulates sales) *because* buying is the only game in town, not vice versa. Advertising does appeal to morbid fears (e.g. of body odors) and false hopes (of irresistibility) and shoppers faced with indistinguishable brands of a product may choose on the basis of an ad (what method is better?), but this is just the old game of caveat emptor. It thrives on naivete and people learn to resist it through experience. Other vulnerable groups are older people, who had no previous experience—individual or historical—to guide them when the consumer cornucopia suddenly developed after World War II, and poor people, who do not have enough money to learn through years of trial, error and disillusionment to be shrewd consumers. The constant refinement of advertising claims, visual effects and so on, shows that experience desensitizes. No one really believes that smoking Brand X cigarettes will make you sexy. (The function of sex in an ad is probably the obvious one—to lure people into paying closer attention to the ad—rather than to make them "identify" their lust with a product. The chief effect of the heavy sexual emphasis in advertising has been to stimulate a national preoccupation with sex, showing that you can't identify away a basic human drive as easily as all that.) Madison Avenue has increasingly de-emphasized "motivational" techniques in favor of aesthetic ones—TV commercials in particular have become incredibly inventive visually—and even made a joke out of the old motivational ploys (the phallic Virginia Slims ad, for instance, is

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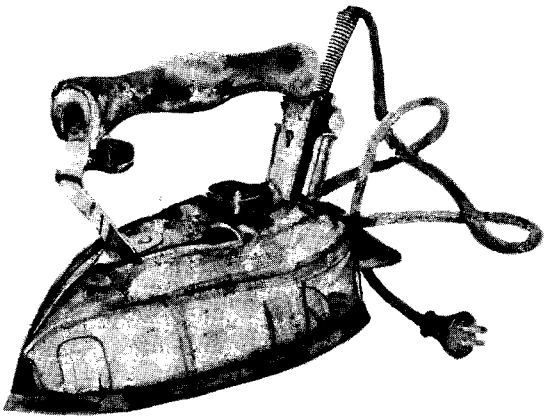
blatantly campy). We can conclude from this that either the depth psychology approach never worked in the first place, or that it has stopped working as consumers have gotten more sophisticated.

The argument that the corporations create new psychological needs in order to sell their wares is equally flimsy. There is no evidence that propaganda can in itself create a desire, as opposed to bringing to consciousness a latent desire by suggesting that means of satisfying it are available. This idea is superstitious: it implies that the oppressor is diabolically intelligent (he has learned how to control human souls) and that the media have magic powers. It also mistakes effects for causes and drastically oversimplifies the relation between ideology and material conditions. We have not been taught to dislike our smell so that they can sell deodorants; deodorants sell because there are social consequences for smelling. And the negative attitude about our bodies that has made it feasible to invent and market deodorants is deeply rooted in our anti-sexual culture, which in turn has been shaped by exploitive modes of production and class antagonism between men and women.

THE CONFUSION BETWEEN CAUSE and effect is particularly apparent in the consumerist analysis of women's oppression. Women are not manipulated by the media into being domestic servants and mindless sexual decorations, the better to sell soap and hair spray. Rather, the image reflects women as they are forced by men in a sexist society to behave. Male supremacy is the oldest and most basic form of class exploitation; it was not invented by a smart ad man. The real evil of the media image of women is that it supports the sexist status quo. In a sense, the fashion, cosmetics and "feminine hygiene" ads are aimed more at men than at women. They encourage men to expect women to sport all the latest trappings of sexual slavery—expectations women must then fulfill if they are to survive. That advertisers exploit women's subordination rather than cause it can be clearly seen now that *male* fashions and toiletries have become big business. In contrast to ads for women's products, whose appeal is "use this and he will want you" (or "if you don't use this, he won't want you"), ads for the male counterparts urge, "You too can enjoy perfume and bright-colored clothes; don't worry, it doesn't make you feminine." Although advertisers are careful to emphasize how *virile* these products are (giving them names like "Brut," showing the man who uses them hunting or flirting with admiring women—who, incidentally, remain decorative objects when the sell is aimed directly at men), it is never claimed that the product is *essential* to masculinity (as make-up is essential to femininity), only *compatible* with it. To convince a man to buy, an ad must appeal to his desire for autonomy and freedom from conventional restrictions; to convince a woman, an ad must appeal to her need to please the male oppressor.

FOR WOMEN, BUYING AND wearing clothes and beauty aids is not so much consumption as work. One of a woman's jobs in this society is to be an attractive sexual object, and clothes and make up are tools of the trade. Similarly, buying food and household furnishings is a domestic task; it is the wife's chore to pick



out the commodities that will be consumed by the whole family. Appliances and cleaning materials are tools that facilitate her domestic function. When a woman spends a lot of money and time decorating her home or herself, or hunting down the latest in vacuum cleaners, it is not idle self-indulgence (let alone the result of psychic manipulation) but a healthy attempt to find outlets for her creative energies within her circumscribed role.

There is a persistent myth that a wife has control over her husband's money because she gets to spend it. Actually, she does not have much more financial autonomy than the employee of a corporation who is delegated to buy office furniture or supplies. The husband, especially if he is rich, may allow his wife wide latitude in spending—he may reason that since she has to work in the home she is entitled to furnish it to her taste, or he may simply not want to bother with domestic details—but he retains the ultimate veto power. If he doesn't like the way his wife handles his money, she will hear about it. In most households, particularly in the working class, a wife cannot make significant expenditures, either personal or in her role as object-servant, without consulting her husband. And more often than not, according to statistics, it is the husband who makes the final decisions about furniture and appliances as well as about other major expenditures like houses, cars and vacations.

THE CONSUMERISM THEORY IS the outgrowth of an aristocratic, European-oriented anti-materialism based on upper-class resentment against the rise of the vulgar bourgeoisie. Radical intellectuals have been attracted to this essentially reactionary position (Herbert Marcuse's view of mass culture is strikingly similar to that of conservative theorists like Ernest Van Den Haag) because it appeals both to their dislike of capitalism and to their feeling of superiority to the working class. This elitism is evident in radicals' conviction that they have seen through the system, while the average working slob is brainwashed by the media. (Oddly, no one claims that the ruling class is oppressed by commodities; it seems that rich people consume out of free choice.) Ultimately this point of view

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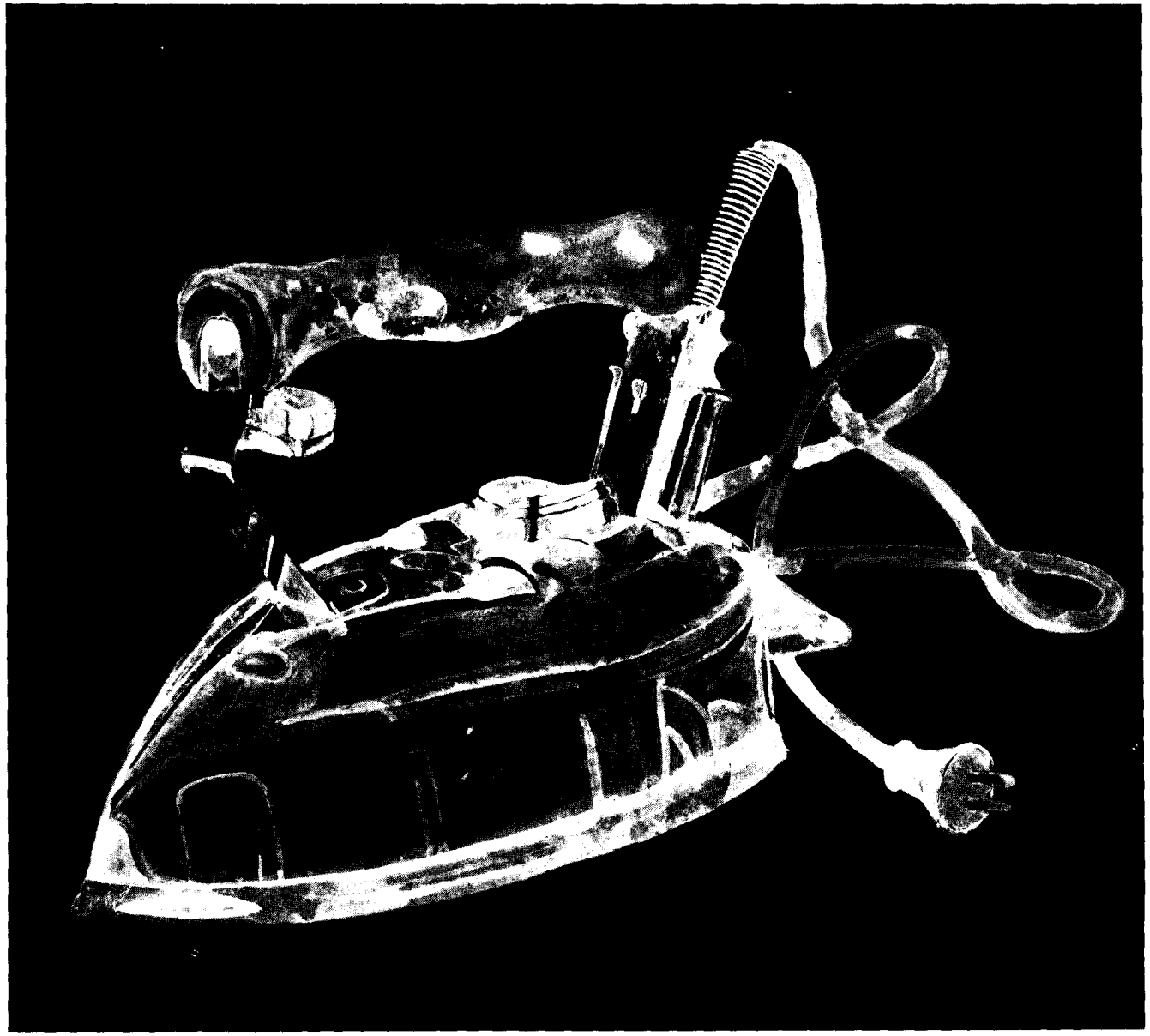

leads to a sterile emphasis on individual solutions—if only the benighted would reject their "plastic" existence and move to East Village tenements—and the conclusion that people are oppressed because they are stupid or sick. The obnoxiousness of this attitude is compounded by the fact that radicals can only maintain their dropout existence so long as plenty of brainwashed workers keep the economy going.

Consumerism as applied to women is blatantly sexist. The pervasive image of the empty-headed female consumer constantly trying her husband's patience with her extravagant purchases contributes to the myth of male superiority: we are incapable of spending money rationally; all we need to make us happy is a new hat now and then. (There is an analogous racial stereotype—the black with his Cadillac and his magenta shirts.) Furthermore, the consumerism line allows Movement men to avoid recognizing that they exploit women by attributing women's oppression solely to capitalism. It fits neatly into already existing radical theory and concerns, saving the Movement the trouble of tackling the real problems of women's liberation. And it retards the struggle against male supremacy by dividing women. Just as in the male movement, the belief in consumerism encourages radical women to patronize and put down other women for trying to survive as best they can, and maintains individualist illusions.

If we are to build a mass movement we must recognize that no individual decision, like rejecting consumption, can liberate us. We must stop arguing about whose life style is better (and secretly believing ours is) and tend to the task of collectively fighting our own oppression and the ways in which we oppress others. When we create a political alternative to sexism, racism and capitalism, the consumer problem, if it is a problem, will take care of itself.

Ellen Willis is an activist in Women's Liberation. She is currently working in a G.I. organizing project in Colorado.

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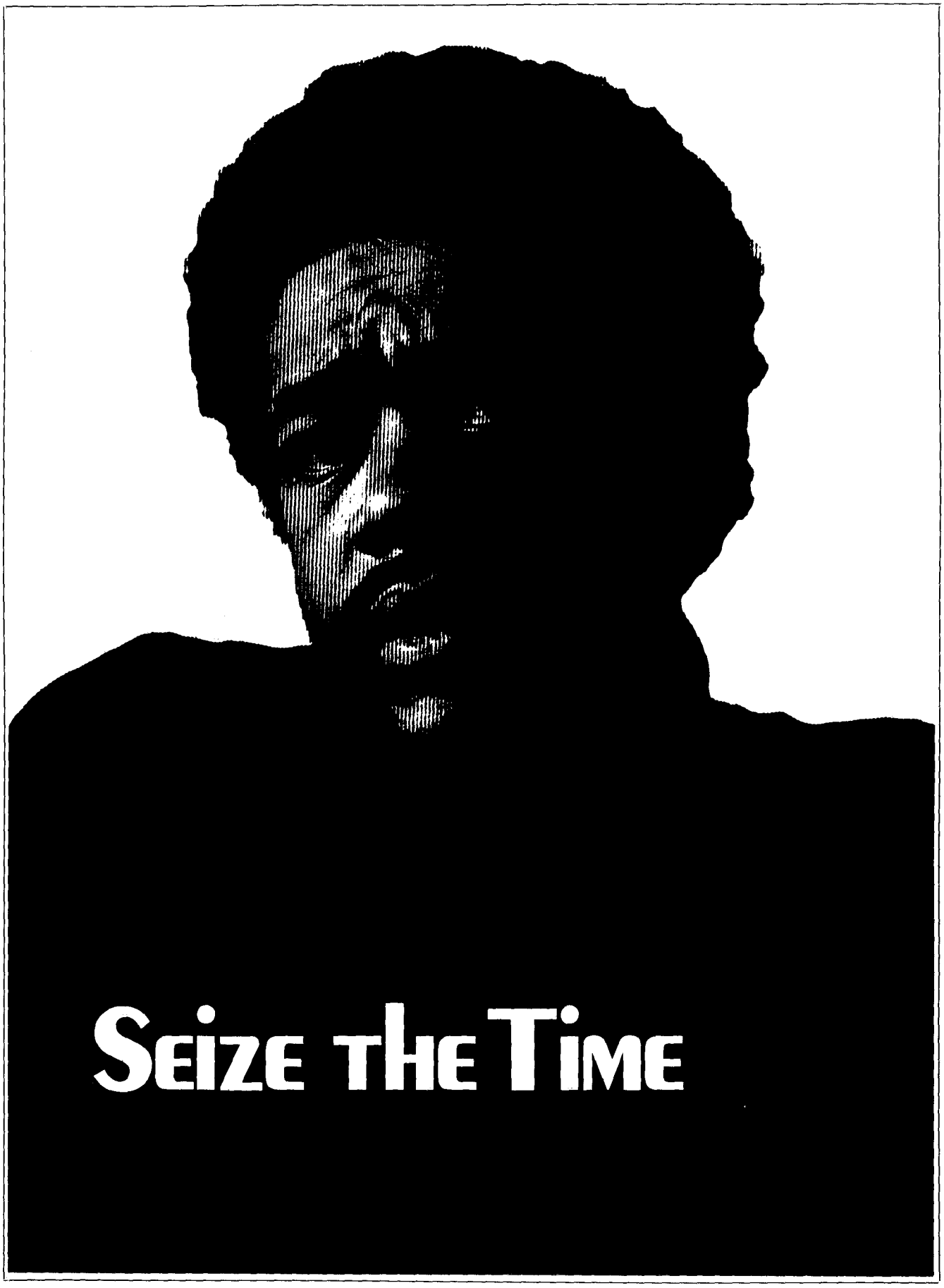

by Bobby Seale

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The Next Panther Victim

THEY ASSASSINATED MALCOLM X; they drove Eldridge Cleaver into exile; but Bobby Seale is the first black leader whom they are going to try to murder judicially, while the whole world watches.

The following pages, which contain excerpts from Seale's forthcoming Random House book on the history of the Black Panther Party, show the workings of this systematic vendetta. Seale describes his kidnapping by federal marshals acting in defiance of a ruling of the California State courts and his torture in a federal courtroom in Chicago for demanding his most basic constitutional right of self-defense. The stark descriptions on these pages and Seale's painfully concrete prose images give one an overwhelming sense of the vindictiveness and brutality of the forces he is up against in his forthcoming trial in Connecticut.

Of the three extraordinary creators of the Black Panther symbol, Bobby Seale is the least familiar to the outside world. This is not because he lacks charisma—anyone who has been privileged to know him or see him in action knows that he is a leader. Unlike the poetic insight of Eldridge Cleaver or the prophetic courage of Huey Newton, however, Bobby's leadership comes from his ability to express with a simple eloquence the soul of the black ghetto and its resistance to the white man's oppression. For instance, the program of providing free breakfasts for children, which is associated with Seale's leadership of the party, is characteristic of the way in which his revolutionary consciousness flows from the harsh realities of the lives of black people in this country.

A basically gentle, modest spokesman, Bobby always pushed himself into the background, referring to Huey as the genius, himself the follower. One can recall many "mandates" from Minister of Defense Huey P. Newton, and from Minister of Information Eldridge Cleaver, but not from the Chairman, Bobby. The role of "chairman" was for him just that: the mediator, the coordinator of the forces. Moreover, Seale's style of leadership was carried beyond the Panther Party itself. Once, when Bobby appeared on a local TV talk show run by a vicious right-winger, a verbal conflict broke out between Charles Evers, who was on the panel, and a black militant in the audience. In a moment, Seale had intervened, anguish on his face and in his voice for the division between the black men. Calmly, he set forth the community of interest between them as oppressed fighters for liberation. And then with what seemed an almost superhuman patience, he returned to the dialogue with the hostile commentator before him in an effort to reach out through the television screen to America at large.

It is as a teaching force not to whites, however, but to black people that Seale and the Panthers assume their chief importance. Their message is awesome in its simplicity: Stand up, black brothers and sisters, and defend yourselves. By any means necessary.

In carrying this message, Bobby, probably more than any other black leader, is the embodiment of black Everyman. This, no doubt, is why they want to kill him. Read his account- dictated from a San Francisco jail—of his gagging in Chicago; listen to that cry over and over in a thousand ways as his torturers stuff and tape his mouth: "I want my constitutional right to defend myself." Reflect upon the fact that the United States Supreme Court has already upheld such gagging as necessary and proper, and then know that the only black man white America will tolerate is one either in a position of obedience, or dead, and that Bobby G. Seale will never go down on his knees.

—THE EDITORS

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[KIDNAPPED]

ON THE EVENING OF August 19, 1969, we were returning from the wedding of Ray "Masai" Hewitt, our Minister of Education, and Shirley Needley, one of the sisters in the Party. We were about three blocks from the office when a car sped up from our left, swerved in front of us, and stopped at the light; the people in the car all seemed to be looking at us through the rearview mirror.

"Those cats look like . . ." Masai was saying.

"Pigs!" June Hilliard finished the sentence for him. June was driving. I looked to the right and saw a Volkswagen blocking the entrance to the service station at the corner. Two other cars came up on our rear. "There's pigs all around us in unmarked cars," June said. All of a sudden the doors of the cars around us opened and agents and policemen began to flood out into the street from all directions. They were running towards our car yelling, "Get out of the car! Get out of the car!" They were holding .38 revolvers, .357 Magnums and shotguns on us. There were at least 15 cops surrounding us.

June had gotten out of the car, but the car began to roll because the emergency brake wasn't on. Masai got out of the car also and I hollered to June to pull up the emergency brake. The door on the side where Shirley was was snatched open and a cop pointed a gun in and said, "Get out! This is the FBI. Out of the car! Out of the car!"

One of the agents reached in and grabbed the emergency brake. I watched him as he snatched it up. Then he pointed a gun at me and said, "All right, Seale, get out!" I pulled the lock latch off, opened the door, and stepped out with my hands hanging down at my sides, palms open, looking at him. I was cursing him with everything I could think of because at that point all I could see and think of was that we were being subjected to a form of general harassment. Someone said, "Hands over your head," and "Turn around." They grabbed my shoulder, spun me around and pushed me towards the car. They began to pat-search me and another cop snatched my right arm and pulled it back and put a handcuff on it. Another snatched my left arm and pulled it back from across the trunk of the car and twisted the back of my hands towards my back and said, "Let's go. Let's get out of here."

They had guns in their hands and they were pushing me around. They didn't show me any identification. There must have been 15, 20 or more police and plainclothesmen there. They all had guns. They were dressed in blue jeans, tee shirts and short-sleeved shirts; I didn't see any uniforms. I was rushed into a car and stuck in the back seat,an agent on each side of me. Three of them got in front with shotguns and they drove towards San Francisco. They were giggling with each other, saying, "This was so easy."

I WAS BROUGHT TO THE San Francisco City Jail and booked. Prior to the booking, and after I took everything out of my pockets, the FBI took my little phone book away from me. That was my property. They didn't give it back to me at all. I don't know where it is now.

I noticed one pig standing there whose face I'd seen a number of times before at press conferences and speaking engagements. I know his face very well, because one time at a press conference I walked up to him and asked him was he a government agent. "No," he said, "I don't have anything to do with the government. I'm just a newsman. Can I come to this press conference?"

"Sure you can," I said. "I just wanted to expose you if you were an agent so that the rest of the newsmen can let people know there are agents and provocateurs working for the government all around us, who want to take things out of context and tell lies." Well, he was one of those cats. "Haven't I seen you somewhere before?" I asked him.

He looked at me and just grinned. He really thought he was superman. You can just look at a cat and see how he's psychologically goofed up with superman notions, so brainwashed that he thinks he's defending the so-called "free world." There is no "free world." How in the world can America be free when somewhere between 40 and 50 million poor, oppressed people are living at subsistence and below? So you look at this dude and you say to yourself, "Superman never saved no black people, you know, I never saw him save no black people in the comic books."

The dude was grinning and he said, "Yes, you might have seen me before."

They tried to get me to sign a statement. "No, I'm not signing it," I said. Then they tried to get me to sign something else; I don't know whether it was an attempt to get me to sign some stupid crap about waiving extradition rights or what the heck it was. "I'm not signing nothing," I told them. "I don't have to sign anything."

They took my fingerprints and a mug shot and told me to go down the hall, and they would give me a cell. I walked down there and spoke to a black cop who said he was a member of the Officers for Justice. He told me to sit down in a little office there. He offered me a cup of coffee and I drank it. I was rather tired and wanted to go to sleep. I knew that I'd have to wait overnight before getting bailed out, so he gave me some blankets, put me in a cell, and I fell off to sleep.

THE FIRST INDICATION THAT I HAD that I was being railroaded on some trumped-up charges in connection with that Connecticut frame-up (what I call a criminal agent Mission Impossible plot to try and destroy the Black Panther Party) was after I'd been handcuffed on Shattuck Avenue in Berkeley. They were walking me toward a car. They said, "You're under arrest for conspiracy to commit murder, and conspiracy to kidnap and murder, in connection with Connecticut."

"What are these damned fools doing now?" I thought right off. "Now these cats are out of their minds."

"–And for unlawful flight to avoid prosecution," they put it.

I said to myself, "These damned fools! Trying to railroad me. They're trying to railroad everybody they can out of the Party. They're trying to stop the Party from functioning. We knew it was coming, but now they're going to try and trump up something else, even on me."

The next day they still didn't have a warrant. I appeared in the federal court in front of a U.S. Commissioner, and McTernan [Garry's partner] argued that the bail of $95,000 was too high and also that I hadn't fled anywhere

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to avoid prosecution.

"He's been in the public eye continuously," McTernan said. He's watched 24 hours a day so what does the government mean by claiming that he was fleeing to avoid prosecution? This man has been making speaking engagements. He's been on national TV down in Los Angeles. He spoke to 4000 people at the National Conference to Combat Fascism Convention in Oakland. He's in the public eye everywhere."

The Commissioner said he had no jurisdiction over that and could only set the bail, which he said would be $25,000. So I went back to the cell in the federal building.

Two hours after that first appearance in the federal court I got called back again and bail was posted, $25,000 in a cashier's check. When I got ready to leave the Commissioner's court, the marshals said, "Will you step back here first?" I thought to myself, "Now, wait a minute. They've already booked me." They repeated, "Step back here!" So I stepped back there and I thought, Last time I was here for the Chicago thing, when I posted bail I had to come back through here and I guess this is where they process you out! But no sooner had I gone back than they said, "Well, you can wait in the cell right there." So I stepped back into the cell. The door was still open, and 30 seconds later, a cop in plainclothes walked back and said, "I'm from the San Francisco Police Department, and you're under arrest!"

"What kind of crap is this?" I said to myself. "These cats are really out to railroad me. I just got through posting bail. What the hell are they going to arrest me for now?"

They brought me back and put me in the City Jail. They said they had a warrant from Connecticut on the trumped-up charges of murder and conspiracy to murder and kidnap, but they didn't actually get it until several days later. As soon as they had me in the County Jail they dropped the phony "unlawful flight" charges. They had just used that as a pretext to kidnap me.

* * *

[TO CHICAGO IN CHAINS]

I WAS SITTING IN SAN FRANCISCO County Jail when Charles Garry rushed in one evening and said, "They're going to move you tomorrow."

"Tomorrow?" I said, "They can't move me. They're not supposed to move me if I'm waiting for an extradition hearing. All they're going to do is try and plot a whole operation to get me to Chicago and try to extradite me to Connecticut from there."

Before Garry left I told him, "Look, man, when I get to Chicago I'm not letting those cats choose a lawyer for me—someone I've never spoken to." He said, "Well, we'll have to confirm it, but it looks like I'll have to go to the hospital for a gall bladder operation."

"All the other cats have lawyers," I said. "The only thing I'll agree with those other lawyers is that they can handle my pre-trial motions, but the only person I'll go into court with is you. The judge will have to see my point of view, because I'm going to fire any appointed lawyers. I'm not going to let the judge choose anybody else for me either."

The sheriff around here, the jailers, didn't know anything about my leaving, so I told them that I wanted a shower early in the morning and that I wanted to get all cleaned up because I was being taken out. At first they kept telling me I didn't know what I was talking about, but later they allowed me to take a shower and shave.

I packaged what little property I had—cigarettes, writing paper, handkerchiefs, etc.—and they put it in a box and tied it up and took everything out of my pockets. After I was dressed they put a chain around my waist. It had a little clip on it, and an extra piece of seven-inch chain hanging down. Then they put two sets of handcuffs through one of the links in the chain and they put both cuffs on me. They brought out two more prisoners and put some leg irons on all of us . . .

They drove out through the city and as we went up the ramp on the freeway and started toward the Bay Bridge, a highway patrolman fell in behind us. As we went further by the main police station, another highway patrolman got in front of us. That's how we went across the bridge. At the toll plaza a third highway patrolman pulled in behind us. We then headed north on Interstate 80 to Sacramento . . .

The marshals stopped in Marysville and we ate there. I remember one of them asked me what I considered a silly question. He said, "You guys wanna eat out here? Some guys don't like to let other people to see them chained down and everything."

"Man, it don't make me no difference," I said. "I'm a political prisoner. It's up to these cats here." They said they didn't care either, so we sat out there and ate for about 20 minutes.

At that time, although I didn't know it, Allan Brotsky, one of Garry's partners, had been arguing in court back in San Francisco for me, and the judge had ordered that I not be taken to Chicago. The U.S. Attorney kept on stalling. He said I was gone and they couldn't get in touch with our car. All they had to do was to contact the Highway Patrol escort which followed us all the way to the Nevada border.

I noticed once when we did stop, the head marshal made a phone call. This was around noon. The judge had given the order at 11 A.M. At noon we were still in California. Legally, I should have been taken back to San Francisco. The marshal must have called San Francisco because the next morning after he got us out of jail in Reno he told me that a lawyer had gone to bat for me yesterday and did a pretty good job. He asked if I knew an Al Brotsky.

* * *

After a week-long journey cross-country in chains, Bobby Seale arrived in Chicago where he was held in the Cook County Jail. One of the original eight defendants in the Conspiracy Trial, Seale remained in Chicago until severed from the case.

[CHICAGO. MY CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS ARE DENIED ME]

THE TRIAL FINALLY GOT UNDER WAY the next day. I was in the hospital at the time, and I was allowed to keep my legal stuff with me. Meanwhile I was waiting for a message to come from Garry. Finally I got a phone call through to Garry's office. I talked to Barney Dreyfus, Garry's law partner, and I asked him if Garry was definitely going into the hospital or had he changed his mind. His doctors said he had better go have

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that gall bladder operation right away because it would be a real danger to his life not to. "Well, I'm going to ask the judge to postpone my part of the trial so that I can have Garry," I said, "because I can't function without Garry, and I don't want these other lawyers here. Let Garry know what I'm doing, and then maybe after he gets out of the hospital we can go on." Dreyfus mentioned that they had talked to the Panther Party Central Committee about my situation, and the Central Committee also agreed that since I had a legal right to fire the lawyers I should do it.

And boom! That's what happened. That night I was in the hospital and wrote out my first motion which was a request that I be allowed to fire the lawyers and postpone the trial until Charles Garry could defend me. The next morning, Friday, I got up and went to the trial, and when I got to the defense table I told Kunstler that I was going to fire everybody. One of the defendants said, "Man, that's going to make it look like all of the defendants are splitting."

I said, "Man, the defendants aren't splitting. I'm not splitting from you cats. It's just that my situation is very different, man, in a lot of ways. These cats stuck me on the tail end of this indictment to try to railroad me to prison so I need Garry here and everybody knows it. Garry's my lawyer. I haven't confirmed any of these other lawyers. I'm not going to be letting Hoffman pick and choose my lawyer for me, when he knows that Garry is my lawyer, my attorney of record."

The marshal waved the gavel and said, "All rise," and everybody rose. "This court is now in session pursuant to adjournment." Boom. Boom. Boom. "The 'Honorable' Julius J. Hoffman presiding." At that point I got up and walked to the podium and told him, "I'd like to read a statement concerning my legal defense."

"Don't you have a lawyer?" Hoffman asks.

"No," I said. "I want to read this statement concerning my defense." So I read the statement. I got to the point in the statement where I said, ". . . and if you don't respect my Constitutional rights then I'm going to have to consider you a blatant racist who's prejudiced against all the other defendants and myself in particular."

"Hold it! Hold it! Hold it!" Hoffman interrupted me. "What did you say?"

"A blatant racist," I replied. "I consider you a racist just like all the other judges who saw people's Constitutional rights violated in the South through the history of this country." He didn't know where I was coming from. I was

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coming from the fact that a month before the trial started, he'd already denied Charles Garry's motion for a postponement on the basis that he had to go into the hospital for an operation. He said my motion would be denied.

"Well, young man, you have a lawyer. Mr. Kunstler's your lawyer."

"No, he's not my lawyer," I said, and I argued the point. During the first week or so, I got up three or four or five times in this manner. I tried to argue, and when I'd start saying, "But Judge Hoffman, you're wrong. I have a Constitutional right," he'd say, "Take the jury out!" When I made that first motion that first Friday morning, not one witness had been sworn in on the part of the prosecution. Not one. This is very important, because by law, the trial isn't considered begun until a witness is sworn in . . .

Now I had nothing personal against Kunstler, because I know that Kunstler is in the struggle and he is supposed to be a good lawyer. I was just upholding the principle that I had a right to my own lawyer. From there on, for about two or three weeks, it was me standing up whenever my

name was mentioned. Most of the time when I stood up Hoffman would say to Kunstler, "You are the lawyer for Mr. Seale." And I'd say, "No, he's not my lawyer. I want to request the right to have my own lawyer, Charles R. Garry, here, or the right to defend myself."

Hoffman didn't even investigate; he didn't care. A judge is supposed to at least investigate a person's positions, especially regarding his legal defense. But he didn't.

AS I GOT MORE LEGAL INFORMATION, I began to argue harder. I got hold of material about an old Reconstruction law, Section 1941 of the U.S. Government Code, that says a black man cannot be discriminated against in any manner, in any court in America, concerning "legal defense." When I got hold of that—Oh, man! It was a real thing with me, because I knew I was right by the laws, the Sixth Amendment, etc. . . .

Before I was gagged, Hoffman actually got to the point where he'd shout over me. I'd jump up and start talking rather fast, saying, "Judge Hoffman, you know darn well I have a right to have my own lawyer here or else a right to defend myself." He'd start talking real loud over me: "Take the jury out! Take the jury out! I don't want to hear this man. Mr. Marshal, set that man down! Take the jury out!" He did this so the court recorder would only record what Hoffman was saying and not what I was saying. But I got hip to him. I saw the tactics he was using, so every time he started raising his voice I'd raise my voice too . . .

One morning one of the marshals comes back into the lockup before court started and says, "Bobby, you've got a lot of Black Panthers, a lot of black people out there that's on your side today. I hope nothing happens."

"Well, there ain't nothing going to happen," I said. "They're here to observe. They've got a right to observe. They've got a right to be in there."

"Well, the judge told us to go over and sit you down and I just don't want any of them to start anything."

"They're not going to start nothing," I replied.

Five minutes later they came back and got me. Court still hadn't started. All the defendants were scattered around the defense table. Schultz, Foran [government attorneys] were around the prosecution's table. I said, "Brothers and sisters in the audience, I want to say a few things to you. You've been noticing for the past weeks in this courtroom that I've been getting threatened by the judge and they're talking about gagging me and all this kind of crap, but I

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have a right to speak out in my own behalf. But I don't want you cats out there to get upset and get emotional and start doing anything that's out of the ordinary," I said. "You've got a right to be participants here. You've got a right to observe this trial and see what's going on. If anything happens, don't do anything unnecessary.

"If anybody attacks us, we defend ourselves. That's the principle of the Party. Whether they have a gun or not, if they attack us, we defend ourselves. If they make us leave the courtroom, they just make us leave the courtroom. We leave. But don't nobody do nothing; keep your cool."

The court convened, and Schultz got up and said, very nasty-like, "Your honor, Mr. Seale got up here this morning and was talking about attacking people." He tried to make it sound real bad.

"You're a liar," I said real loud. "You're a racist liar. You're a pig and a fascist."

He was up there talking and I jumped up and walked to the lectern and said, "Yes, I said something to the people this morning, but I didn't really say that. This is a bunch of racist lies, a fascist operation." Then I went back to my seat to sit down. Marshals were moving all around the room about to charge me. They were really coming in on me, man. Schultz was still trying to tell the judge that I had spoken about attacking people.

"You're a bold-faced liar," I said, and I stood up again.

The marshals ran over to me, grabbed me, and the big one hit me. When I stood up, he pushed me back into the seat. As I hit the seat, the whole chair went back over and I hit the floor. At the same time another cat, a big tall cat who we called Slim, came up and pulled my arm, putting it in a hammer-lock.

"Hey, man, you're hurting me," I said. Now this is Slim, trying to do his job, but at the same time trying not to mess up with me. So what he did is he pulled my arm back down and held it there. He said, "Hey, man, be cool."

"No, man," I said, and I was really yelling out. "You're lying to the court, I didn't say a thing about attacking anybody. I said something about self defense, our right to defend ourselves, and being cool."

Schultz continued at this point, telling the judge that I was trying to disrupt the court. By this time the marshals had let me go.

"Why don't you tell the truth about exactly what I said? What I said was, 'Be cool and don't do anything; we have a right to defend ourselves if attacked.' I didn't say anything like what you're trying to insinuate. Isn't that right? Tell the truth!" I hollered at him.

And you know what Schultz did? He says, "Yes, your honor, I'm sorry; that is right; that is what he said." And Schultz went and sat down. I caught him in a cold, bold-faced lie.

* * *

[CHICAGO: SHACKLED, GAGGED AND BOUND]

THE DAY I HAD TO CALL Schultz a liar for trying to misquote me on what I'd said before court opened, I got gagged. I had demanded my rights. I told them, "I demand my Constitutional rights." I even banged on the table while I was talking. "And Judge Hoffman, you know it," I said. "I have a Constitutional right to defend myself." They recessed the court and then came back and Hoffman says, "Mr. Seale, are you going to disrupt this court anymore?"

"I'm not disrupting the court," I replied. "I am going to make my request and demand that I have a right to defend myself, because I know I have that right."

Then Hoffman told the marshals, "Take the defendant and appropriately deal with him." That's the way Hoffman said it. They took me back in the lockup right outside the courtroom. They got some tape and put it across my mouth. They handcuffed my hands down close to the legs of a metal folding chair and put the irons on my legs. They looped the chain through one of the rods running across the front of the folding part of the chair and brought it out and clasped it to my right leg.

The jury came back in, and Judge Hoffman says some kind of crazy crap, "Disregard this and disregard that." I shook my head at the jury and said, "Huh-uh, huh-uh." Some tears started rolling down one of the juror's eyes. I looked at the jury—"Huh-uh."

Hoffman said stuff like, "Mr. Seale is trying to disrupt the court."

I shook my head at the jury, "Uh-uhh, uh-uh," to indicate I wasn't trying to disrupt.

I sat there and something else came. Hoffman said something about me, so I rattled the handcuffs against the metal chair—clang, clang, clang, clang, clang, as a means of objecting, still trying to defend myself. A little later they brought a witness on to testify, and my name was mentioned.

Through the tape I hollered, "I object," in a muffled sound, but it could be heard. The tape wasn't holding too well because of my beard. So I said again, "I object, I object, I have a right to defend myself."

So they took me out again. Two or three marshals lifted the chair up and just took me back into the lockup. They put the tape back on me, and put a rag around my mouth, and tied the thing, and took me back into the courtroom.

Later, Hoffman asked me if I would promise not to "disrupt" the court. He loved to use "disrupt" and "outburst" so the press could print "disrupt" and "outburst" so people wouldn't see what was really going on, because what was involved was really an issue of Constitutional rights. Hoffman said I should indicate my answer by shaking my head up and down for yes, or left to right for no.

I didn't shake my head up and down, nor did I shake it left to right. I said, right through that gag, "I want a right"—my voice was muffled but everybody could hear me—"I want a right to defend myself and you have no right to be gagging me and shackling me. I want to defend myself and that's all I'm going for."

People way in the back of the audience probably couldn't hear me at all, but the judge, the marshals, the press, and the audience close to me could hear.

The first day when I was shackled and gagged, a big black marshal put the iron around my leg real tight, to the point where the blood circulation actually stopped in my right leg. The second time they shackled me that day I motioned for this girl (a black law student sitting at the defense table) to give me a piece of paper, and I wrote a note that the blood circulation was being stopped in my arms because of

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the way they had the handcuffs at the bottom of my hands. The only way I could get some relief was if I slouched way down in the chair. Somebody in the court said that my blood pressure was being stopped, and another marshal came and loosened the handcuffs.

THE NEXT DAY THEY HAD some big straps instead of handcuffs, and they strapped me to a wooden arm chair. "Sit down in the chair," one of the marshals said. I sat down in the chair and said to myself, "Hoffman looks like a damn fool, sitting up there gagging me and carrying on. He knows durn well I've got a right to defend myself; he knows durn well I should have a lawyer here, a lawyer of my choice, and he's foolish." So this cat started wrapping these straps around my arm.

"Say, man, they're kinda tight," I said.

"That's just the way it's gonna have to be."

He wrapped one strap down my leg and said, "Is that tight?"

"No," I said, "they're not tight down there." Then he tightened them up some more. Later another marshal came by and I said, "Say, man, these things are too tight," so he loosened them. After that he put a lot of padding in front of my mouth, and tied a big large rag around it. The rag came across my mouth and went around the back of my neck. Another rag came up under my chin and was tied in a knot on the top of my head.

After I was gagged and everything, they went out and this same big nigger punk pig tightened the straps right back up again around my arms. Then he opened the door and said, "Come on," to one of the other marshals who was standing outside the door, and they picked me up and took me out to the table.

I kept trying to wiggle my hand, but wiggling it wasn't getting any blood circulating this time, so I started pushing the thing and pulling it, pushing and pulling, trying to get some blood circulation. I beckoned to the girl law student with my head. She was my means of communication with Garry. "What do you want?" she asked me. She'd say, "Do you want a pencil?" and I'd shake my head to indicate yeah. In fact I tried to talk through the gag.

While she was standing there trying to help me, Schultz interrupted and said something about, "Your honor, I'd like the court to know that the young lady touched Mr. Seale's hand in a very motherly way when he left the courtroom yesterday." He said that for the jury to hear, hoping to discredit her for trying to help me out.

Anyway, I wrote a little note and said my blood circulation was being stopped and told her to give that to Weinglass and tell Weinglass to tell the court. They were still doing some kind of cross-examining up there, but my blood circulation was stopping. I tried to move the straps. These wooden chairs, they're kind of smooth and varnished and everything. My arm was sitting on top of the arm of the chair, and I tried to slip my arm over to the side. The straps were going around the arm of the chair, and by moving my arm off of the chair that kind of loosened it, and I said, "Ah." So I just pushed my arm back and forth and then started wriggling my hands to get some blood circulation. This big pig looks down and sees that I've kind of loosened the straps and that I'm wiggling my hand to get some blood circulation. He reaches over and grabs the thing. He was trying to tighten the strap up. Man, that hurt the hell out of my arm.

I started to mumble, but I couldn't half be heard. "I want my blood circulation, I want to get my blood circulation." At the same time he was reaching over me and jerking the chair. Two more marshals came up and grabbed at the chair. I bent forward and said, "Huh-uh," and the first pig struck an elbow in my chest. His elbow knocked me back against the back of the chair. He hit me again.

Then three more marshals attacked me, all at the same time with the other two still trying to pick up the chair. The whole chair went up in the air and fell all the way back into the press section. The press was sitting directly behind the defense table and I fell on top of them. They were frantically trying to get out of the way. All of the marshals ran up to me at once. This cat was still elbowing me, tightening this strap up on my left hand. Another marshal came rushing in, and the chair rose halfway in the air and fell over at an angle. The pigs rushed in, and an elbow hit me right in the balls, right in my groin area. It hurt the hell out of me.

At that point I finally got the tips of my fingers up near my mustache and yanked and pulled my head back, yanking that gag off my mouth. I hollered out: "You son of a bitch. You hit me in the balls. Don't hit me in my balls. I'm trying to get my blood circulation."

I said it three or four times. I cussed him out, and I called him a fascist and everything. At the same time the judge was hollering, "The court is adjourned, the court is adjourned." The jury was running out; it looked like all 10 or 12 marshals were beating me over there, and killing me.

Jerry Rubin, who was sitting next to me, got up and hollered out, "Look what you're doing. Elbowing that man. You hit him in the mouth."

The judge said something; he was adjourning the court; it was completely chaotic. This all happened because Judge Hoffman had gagged me, and then this rotten pig tried to brutally treat me while I was gagged and bound and shackled to this chair.

THE NEXT MORNING, WHEN THEY TRIED to gag me, I thought I was going to die—I mean really, literally, die, because of the way they were doing things. I was in the lockup before court convened, and they said, "Sit in the chair."

"Don't tighten these things too tight on me," I said. This one marshal said, "We're not going to tighten them too tight." So they strapped me down, and after they strapped me down, this one cat who said he wasn't going to tighten the things too tight said, "Bobby, we're going to put something in your mouth."

"No, you're not putting a damn thing in my mouth," I said. "Not in my mouth."

"Well, we have to put something inside your mouth. The judge has ordered it, and that's what we're going to do."

"Huh-uh, no sir, you're not putting nothing in my mouth." I'd already made up my mind that if he so much as got his fingers near my mouth, I was going to bite his motherfucking fingers off.

"You'd better not try to put it in my mouth, because I have a tonsillitis problem, and it's going to exhaust me.

Photo: Elihu Blotnick

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With this other infection I'm being treated for and all this penicillin in me, my temperature goes up a degree, sometimes two degrees, and I have to go to sleep to get my temperature down. They have to give me pills to get my temperature down so you don't be putting anything in my mouth. I'm not letting you put it in my mouth no way."

"Grab his head," the marshal said. One of the marshals put the palms of his hands on top of my head. He stepped up to me—he had rubber gloves on and was holding a wad of rag that was rolled up. It was about an inch, an inch and a half long, and an inch in diameter. He was going to jam this junk down my mouth. I was shackled down—legs, arms, everything. He grabbed my nose and held the wad of rag about three or four inches from my mouth. He was going to wait until I needed some breath, and when I opened my mouth, he would move real fast and jam the rag into my mouth. "But it ain't going to work," I thought to myself. "It ain't going to work."

So I sat there. After a while I began to need some breath. I held my breath as long as I could. He was getting ready to jam the rag into my mouth, but before I opened my mouth, I jerked my head to the left and then to the right real fast, and got loose from the grip the other marshal had on my head and the grip that this marshal had on my nose. I put my head down and started catching my breath.

I looked up. They had stepped back. The next time they tried it, the cat put his arm around my head as if he were wrestling with somebody, only I was sitting in the chair and he was standing up behind me. He put his arm around my head, and the back of my head was sitting against his chest. He just held my head. His arm was coming around the top of my forehead near my hairline. My head was leaning back and his arm headed downwards, coming across my right ear. The cat grabbed my nose again. I was mad, man. I was mad as a motherfucker.

"You sons of bitches," I said. "You rotten dogs." They held me again and held my nose. When it began to look like I needed breath, he set the wad of rags right up against my lips and began to press real hard with the palm of his hand. He pressed so hard that I could even feel the blood seeping out of my gums and I could feel the inside of my lips busting because I was holding out. I was holding out as hard as I could. Then I began thinking, "I'm going to pass out. I'm going to pass out." I didn't want to pass out. And then I got scared.

I THOUGHT A WHOLE LOT of things. Things flashed off in my head. This cat was holding my head and I became aware of my feet being on the floor and wanting to push back and go to the left but the cat could feel the tension in my body and I could feel him holding tighter and harder. I felt like I was going to pass out and I didn't want to pass out. And this cat was pushing, pushing, pushing against my mouth.

So I pushed with the bottom of my feet, and somehow I began to use my weight with the chair. My legs were attached to the legs of the chair. I pushed real hard. I was about to pass out. I was thinking about Eldridge and everybody in the Party, and I was thinking about Nat Turner even—all kinds of crazy things. All of a sudden I just pushed with all of my weight, and next thing I knew, I had this cat pinned up against the wall. I had pushed all the way back, almost two and a half feet, and he had let go of my head. His body was between the wooden chair and the wall, and he was trying to push the chair away from the wall, and I was jamming him back against the wall. I was loose. I felt free and I started breathing.

This other cat said, "We can't put this in this cat's mouth. That damn judge. Why did he order us to do this shit anyway?" So they decided not to put anything in my mouth. But that was a battle I fought with them, being shackled.

While they were holding me, I thought about Eldridge, and I thought about the struggle. I even had the crazy notion that I wouldn't open my mouth, even if I passed out. Although I knew that when you pass out, before you die, your mouth sort of automatically opens.

The marshal holding my head was a white cat and the marshal trying to jam the rag in my mouth was a black cat. They were working together. They're both pigs. It doesn't make any difference what color they are. The black marshal said, "Well, we're not going to do it. We can't do it. We did what we could."

Then they got some bandage. It was a roll of the type that football players and basketball players use. You wrap it around your legs, and as you move, it becomes tighter. They had a piece about three inches wide. First they put some tape and some heavy padding all across my mouth, and they began to wrap. They wrapped all the way around. They wrapped it tight, very tight. Then they brought it under my chin, and wrapped it above my head and under my chin—actually it was covering my throat, too. They got it real tight. I started losing my breath again. I was getting choked by the bandage. I started shaking my head from left to right, and the cat says, "I think he's losing his breath." So they unwrapped it real quick.

They started again and made it a point to come right under my chin and keep it away from my throat. But they wrapped it across my mouth and around my neck and all around my ears. They still wrapped it too tight, because I came out in the courtroom and looked to the left and looked to the right and that thing got tighter and tighter.

The blood began to stop coming up to my head. That was too much. I started shaking my head, shaking my head, and Jerry Rubin and a couple of other people stood up.

"He's passing out! That thing is too tight on him!"

I started shaking my head and got my arm slightly loosened. I pushed my head down, and with the tip of my finger got ahold of the gag and pulled it off. I called Judge Hoffman every kind of thing I could call him. "Fascist, sanctioning cruel and unusual punishment, and breaking the Eighth Amendment of the Constitution of the United States." The marshal snatched up the chair and was trying to rush me back to the lockup.

I was calling Hoffman a fascist and constantly referring to the Eighth Amendment of the Constitution of the United States where it says there shall be no cruel and unusual punishment inflicted, and this big old pig marshal put his hand around my mouth, and then he put his hand around my mouth and nose and started pulling. The other marshals grabbed the chair and started dragging it, but when they got to the door there was a little rise caused by the carpet

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by William Henderson

EASTERN DREAM

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William Henderson, born in Missouri in 1943, is a San Francisco artist whose work comments powerfully on the nature of racism and its human consequences in this country. His canvases have been shown in the Human Concern/Personal Torment Show at the Whitney Museum in 1969, and more recently at the Black United exhibition at the new Oakland Museum.

Of the paintings on these pages, Henderson writes, "Painting is a way of life. You paint the life you live, so every painting in some way is a self portrait. My work is about you, and the way I responded. That is my experience; my experience is my life; my life is my painting."

FEASTING DREAMS

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CASTRATION

SMILE

SCREAMING

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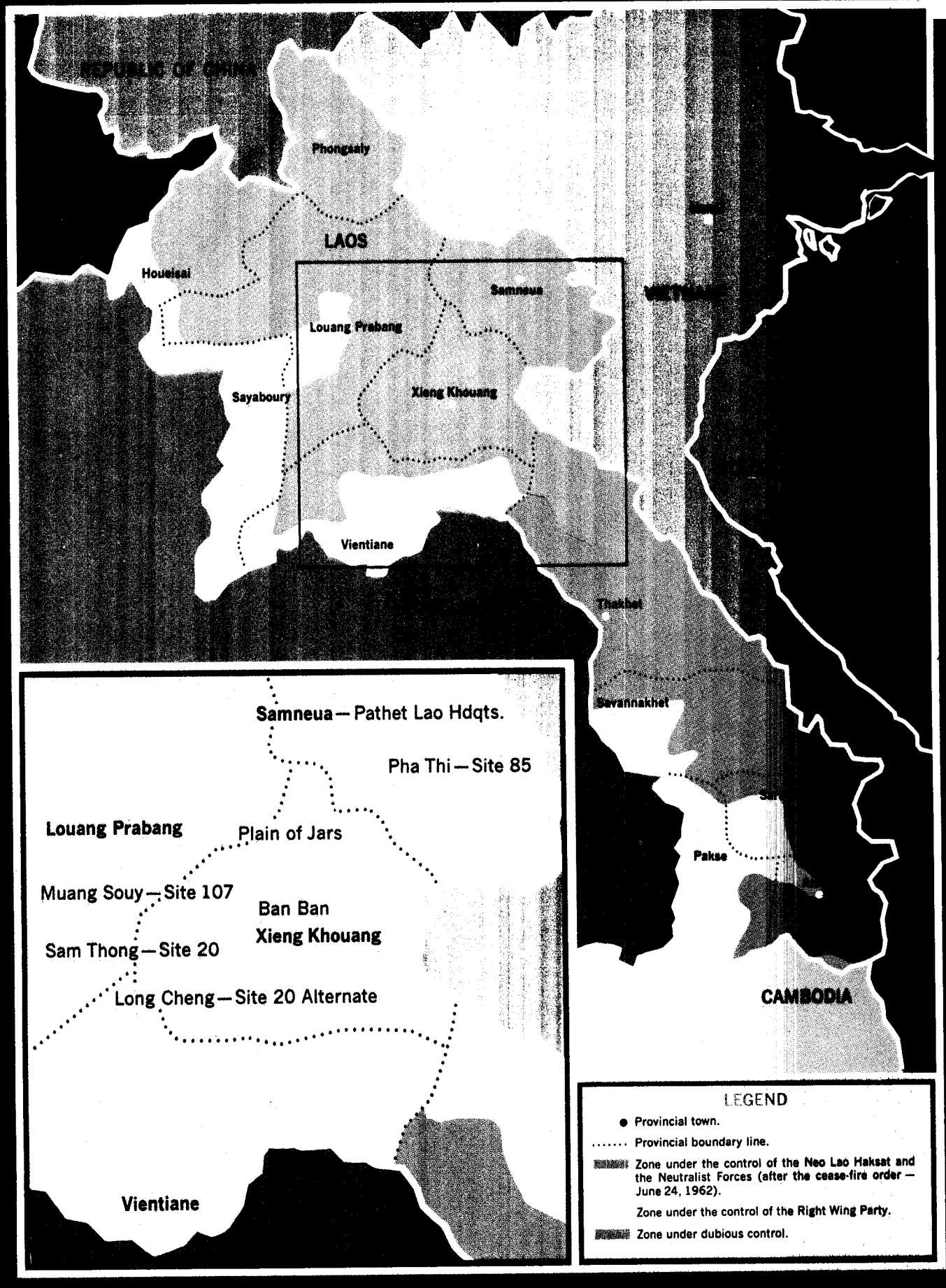

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THE VIETNAMIZATION OF LAOS

ON MARCH 11, 1968, PATHET LAO troops overran the secret American radar base at Phou Pha Thi along the North Vietnamese border in northeastern Laos. The base had been constructed in late 1964, shortly after the Gulf of Tonkin incident, to guide U.S. aircraft flying from Thailand to their targets in North Vietnam and to release their bomb loads electronically. Pha Thi was also used as a base for rescue helicopters, and according to the San Francisco Chronicle, "American Air Force and CIA personnel used the valley landing strip as the base for American-led teams of Meo mercenaries entering North Vietnam on special harassment missions." These teams were also used to attack the Pathet Lao administrative headquarters in Samneua province.

The existence of the base at Pha Thi, besides being a clear violation of the 1962 Geneva Accords on Laos, demonstrates an essential aspect of the war which has long been understood by both sides (if not by the American public): the war in Vietnam and the war in Laos, Thailand and Cambodia are the same war. They cannot, as some U.S. senators have naively, or deceptively, suggested, be fought or resolved in isolation from one another. As early as 1955, the U.S. was organizing an all-Southeast Asian front against communist revolutions (SEATO). By the late '50s, there were U.S. armed and advised Thai and South Vietnamese troops fighting the Pathet Lao in Laos. For its part, the Pathet Lao had helped the Viet Minh in the struggle against French colonial rule in Indochina, and after the neutralist coalition broke down in Laos in 1958-59, the Pathet Lao once more turned to the North Vietnamese for aid as the U.S. pushed a war of extermination by the Royal Laotian Government (RLG) against the Laotian revolutionaries. While they are fighting for a revolution within the context of Laotian society, then, the Pathet Lao have historically also been engaged in an Indochina-wide struggle, by virtue of the very scale on which the war against them has been fought.

The U.S. has consistently justified its actions in Indochina by saying that it was defending Laos and South Vietnam from North Vietnamese aggression. This argument has no more validity in respect to Laos than it does to South Vietnam. The Pathet Lao is an indigenous revolutionary movement and North Vietnamese aid to the Pathet Lao has been in direct response to American intervention in the Laotian civil war. Indeed, the real subversion in Laos has been the virtually complete take-over by the CIA of the Laotian government administration and army and the creation of an economy which is almost totally dependent on United States aid.

[A REVOLUTION IS BORN]

IN LAOS AS IN VIETNAM, an anti-French independence movement emerged immediately after the surrender of the Japanese, who had occupied Indochina during World War II. In coordination with similar moves in Cambodia and Vietnam, the Laotian resistance seized power in one provincial capital after another, starting in Vientiane. On September 1, 1945, Prince Phetsarath proclaimed the rupture of ties with France and declared the independent kingdom of Luang Prabang. He appointed a provisional national assembly, and an independent and unified Laos had a short-lived nominal existence.

On September 17, however, the King of Laos announced the continuance of the French protectorate, dismissing Phetsarath, who then set up a provisional government of Lao Issara (Free Laos), in which Souvanna Phouma–later to lead the "neutralists"–and Souphanouvong–later to lead the Pathet Lao–held important posts. Unwilling to lose their holdings in Indochina, the French began working their way up from the south (the Allies having agreed to let the Kuomintang occupy northern Indochina), decimating the Lao Issara troops and forcing the provisional government into exile in Bangkok. The French then resumed control of Laos and began to reorganize the Laotian units of the French army, instituting a draft of Laotians to aid the French in their fight against the Viet Minh.

Souphanouvong, Souvanna Phouma and Phetsarath were all brothers (Souphanouvong a half-brother of the others), and they had all received engineering degrees in France. Phetsarath represented the royalist, more traditionalist ideology and interests in Laos. Souvanna Phouma was the republican, the neutralist; and Souphanouvong was already a leftist.

Souphanouvong, future leader of the Pathet Lao, had been in France during the Popular Front in 1937, and had

by Banning Garrett

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been in contact with "progressive" intellectuals and leaders of the working class. When he returned to Laos in 1938, he was appointed to the Public Works Department of the French administration. He spent most of the years from 1938 to 1945 building bridges throughout Indochina. Through his job, he contacted many leaders of the rural tribes and gained extensive knowledge of the topography of Laos. It is not surprising, therefore, that Souphanouvong had a broad Indochinese, rather than narrowly Laotian, view of the anti-colonial struggle. Unlike the neutralists and royalists, he felt that true Laotian independence was inseparable from the elimination of French control in all Indochina and that it was inconsistent to allow the French to use Laos as a staging area for attacks on the Viet Minh, using Lao troops.

In September 1947, Souphanouvong "presided over a conference held in Udorn, Thailand (presently a U.S. Air Force base), and attended by delegates of the communist parties of Indonesia, Malaya and Burma, by representatives of the Lao Issara, the Khmer Issarak (Cambodian Freedom Movement) and the Viet Minh." Thus, at an early date, Southeast Asians were organizing a united front against Western imperialism.

When the French signed a limited agreement for Laotian independence within the French Union and the Lao Issara dissolved, Souphanouvong left for the hills and began to organize a resistance movement, culminating in the formation of the Pathet Lao on August 13, 1950.

In 1951, the Viet Minh, the Pathet Lao and the Khmer Issarak met and agreed to coordinate their fight against the French. Troops of the Viet Minh and the Pathet Lao fought together in Laos in 1953, and in preparation for Dien Bien Phu in 1954.

[THE REVOLUTION IS NATIONAL AND SOCIAL]

ORGANIZED AS AN INDEPENDENCE movement against the French attempt to re-establish their Indochinese empire, the Pathet Lao was also a revolutionary movement against the quasi-feudal structure of Laotian society, which had been reinforced by French rule. Like "protracted war" in China and Vietnam, the struggle in Laos has meant a continuous revolution in Laotian society.

Prior to the national organization of the Pathet Lao, most peasants did not even know they were "Laotians," nor did they share common ethnic backgrounds and languages. (In Houa Khong province, for example, there are 35 ethnically different groups.) Other than forays by Royal Laotian Government troops, tax collectors (recently the RLG has given up attempting to collect taxes, with the U.S. defraying the cost) and opium traders (to whom the mountain tribesmen sold their crops), the peasant has had little contact with the outside world. (In one area where a study was done in 1966, most of the people did not know who Souvanna Phouma, the Laotian head of state, was.) Laotian peasant communities are extremely isolated not only from the central government but from one another, and have a long history of tribal wars.

It is in this milieu that the Pathet Lao has tried to create a sense of national identity, of inter-tribal cooperation and communication, and of the solidarity of Indochinese peoples in the struggle against the U.S.

As in Vietnam, one of the first acts of the Pathet Lao was to remove RLG-appointed village headmen and to secure the election of popular leaders in the customary manner. Agents of the Pathet Lao lived and worked in the villages with the people, in contrast to the government agents who came through, commandeering "the best girls, the best pigs and the best chickens," and conscripting labor for their personal use.

In the areas under their control (about two-thirds of the territory and 20 to 30 per cent of the population of three million), the Pathet Lao have open government structures, with a rule-by-committee system. But they have also created parallel government structures in nominally RLG territory. Bernard Fall wrote that, as of 1965, "there existed at least 11 full-fledged PL [Pathet Lao] provincial administrations (out of a total of 16 Laotian provinces), and these successfully overshadowed the legal but ineffective RLG administration."

Jacques deCornoy of *Le Monde,* who was behind Pathet Lao lines for 12 days in April 1968, found that the Pathet Lao had built a new social and political organization on the basis of the traditional culture, using such methods as adding new political lyrics to traditional songs, and revolutionary content to traditional dance. In the teacher-training schools, all the most important tribes were represented, and the people were taught both in Lao and in their tribal languages. The teachers spent part of every day helping with agriculture. DeCornoy said that these teachers were being trained to be very different from the Western-educated Lao in RLG areas. The people trained by the RLG were taught to wear business suits and to despise manual labor and peasant life. In contrast, the Pathet Lao teachers went back to their villages and lived and worked with the people.

The Pathet Lao has been able to unite the different tribal and ethnic groupings in a common struggle, a singular achievement in Laotian history. Traditionally, the ethnic Lao dominated all other minority groups, referring to some of them as the "Kha," or "slave," and using them as such. When the Pathet Lao was organized in August 1950, it included leaders of the various minority tribes, some of whom were chosen as ministers in the resistance government; the original program included equality of races and ethnic groups.

Although the Pathet Lao has membership from all the tribal groups in Laos, including both the Meo and the Lao, the territorial and ethnic configuration of the struggle between the Pathet Lao and the RLG has a continuity with Laotian history. And the allies that each side has sought are based on tradition and on tribal realities. The ethnic Lao population (the base of support for the RLG) is generally settled along the Mekong, on the Thai border—a constantly changing political demarcation that does not correspond to ethnic distribution. There are about seven million Thai Lao across the border from the 800,000 Laotian Lao, and travel across the Mekong to visit relatives is frequent. The minorities which provide the main base for the Pathet Lao are clustered in the hills along the Vietnamese border. Many of these hill tribes spill across the border and have more in common with minorities of Vietnam (particularly North

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Vietnam) than they do with the Lao.

It may be impossible to resolve this ethnic, geographic and "class" conflict ("class" in that the entire elite is ethnic Lao and has been the socially, politically and economically dominant class, historically as well as presently) in favor of a single, viable Laotian entity. However, the fact that the Pathet Lao have had success in establishing equality and cooperation among the tribal groups indicates that national unity may be possible—if it is achieved within the context of a greater social revolution. The outstanding obstacle, beyond that of culture and tradition, has been the role that Western forces (first French and now U.S.) have played over the past two decades in inhibiting and distorting political, social and economic development in Laos.

[WASHINGTON INTERVENES]

BEGINNING IN THE MID-'50S, the political history of Laos has been dominated by America's attempts to establish a government there which would go along with U.S. policy in Indochina and be willing and able to destroy the Pathet Lao. As a result, the Pathet Lao, excluded from effective participation in the government, has been left with no other way to function than insurgency.

By the time of the signing of the Geneva Agreements on July 20, 1954, the Pathet Lao had liberated two-thirds of Laos. Although the Pathet Lao was not officially represented at the Geneva Conference (it was argued that it was a complete fabrication of North Vietnam), it was given two northeastern provinces, Phongsaly and Samneua, as regroupment areas. The conference called for withdrawal of all foreign forces from Laos, and for nationwide elections in 1955. The International Control Commission (ICC) was set up to supervise the implementation of the Geneva Accords, which were designed to integrate the Pathet Lao into the rest of Laotian life, and to neutralize Laos.

Soon after the signing of the Accords, however, U.S. Secretary of State Dulles organized the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), the clear intention of which was not only to prevent future communist revolutions in Laos and South Vietnam but also to "roll back" successful revolutions in China and North Vietnam. David Horowitz argues that Dulles' objective was to make Laos, like South Vietnam, a protectorate of SEATO. To do this it was necessary not to integrate the Pathet Lao into a coalition government, but to defeat them. Unlike Diem, however, "Premier Souvanna Phouma could not be counted on to request American military assistance under Article IV of the Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty. Indeed, he immediately incurred American displeasure by working systematically to achieve the neutral coalition government that had been intended for his country by the 1954 agreements" (RAMPARTS June 29, 1968).

The U.S. therefore consciously sought out and backed right-wing elements which were dedicated to wiping out the Pathet Lao rather than to establishing a neutral Laos. (Meanwhile the Pathet Lao had, by November 1954, complied with all the requirements of the Geneva Agreements, including withdrawal of all Viet Minh.) By early July 1955, the U.S. was rearming and expanding the Laotian Army, hoping to achieve a military victory over the Pathet Lao, using U.S. planes for transport of troops and U.S. advisers in the field for an offensive in Samneua and Phongsaly provinces.

It was not until 1957 that the Laotian government, despite overt American and Thai disapproval, agreed on the integration of the Pathet Lao into national life. At that time Souphanouvong and Phoumi Vongvichit of the Pathet Lao became ministers in the coalition government headed by Souvanna Phouma, and the Pathet Lao forces were demobilized. Pathet Lao leaders settled down in Vientiane and organized a political party, the Neo Lao Hak Sat. Elections for an additional 20 parliamentary seats were held in May 1958, and despite U.S. attempts to influence the outcome, the left won 13 of the seats.

THE SUCCESS OF THE LEFT in the elections so panicked Washington that the U.S. began to engineer a series of events that resulted in a successful coup by the American-groomed cousin of dictator Marshal Sarit of Thailand, General Phoumi Nosavan, bringing to power a right-wing government under Phoui Sananikone that was committed to eliminating the Pathet Lao.

Fabricated reports of North Vietnamese attacks were used by Phoui to obtain emergency dictatorial powers for 12 months. By this time, Phoumi had become the dominant right-wing influence in the Laotian army. In February 1959, the ICC was asked to leave on the grounds that Laos had fulfilled her obligations under the Geneva Agreement, thus paving the way for U.S. intervention. Hugh Toye argues: "It is not hard to imagine how, from the Pathet Lao point of view, it seemed that a dangerous situation was beginning to arise. Their first setback had been the departure of the International Control Commission, one of whose main duties had been to prevent discrimination or reprisals against them. Freed thereafter from international checks, and under increasing pressure from the right, the government had then abandoned the neutral policy of the Vientiane Agreements on the basis of which Samneua and Phongsaly provinces had been handed over by the Pathet Lao. The Pathet Lao then lost their representation in the administration. Finally, all possibility of their working through the Assembly had been deferred by the prime minister's assumption of emergency powers. The Pathet Lao were being forced back into insurgency."

But Phoui made the error of raising the possibility of negotiations with the Pathet Lao, and antagonizing the CIA's protégé, Phoumi. As a result, the CIA backed a successful coup which brought Phoumi and the right wing of the Army to power. Phoumi proceeded to rig the general elections scheduled for April, and to announce that Prince Souphanouvong, who had been arrested on trumped-up charges the previous year, would be publicly tried. (Souphanouvong and 15 other Pathet Lao leaders soon escaped, however, having won over their guards.)

On August 9, 1960, American plans for a solid right-wing regime were once again upset when an unknown paratroop captain, Kong Le, staged a coup in Vientiane. Having been in the field, he knew that the reports of a Viet Minh invasion had been false, and he was aware of the corruption and self-seeking in Vientiane. He announced that he aimed to

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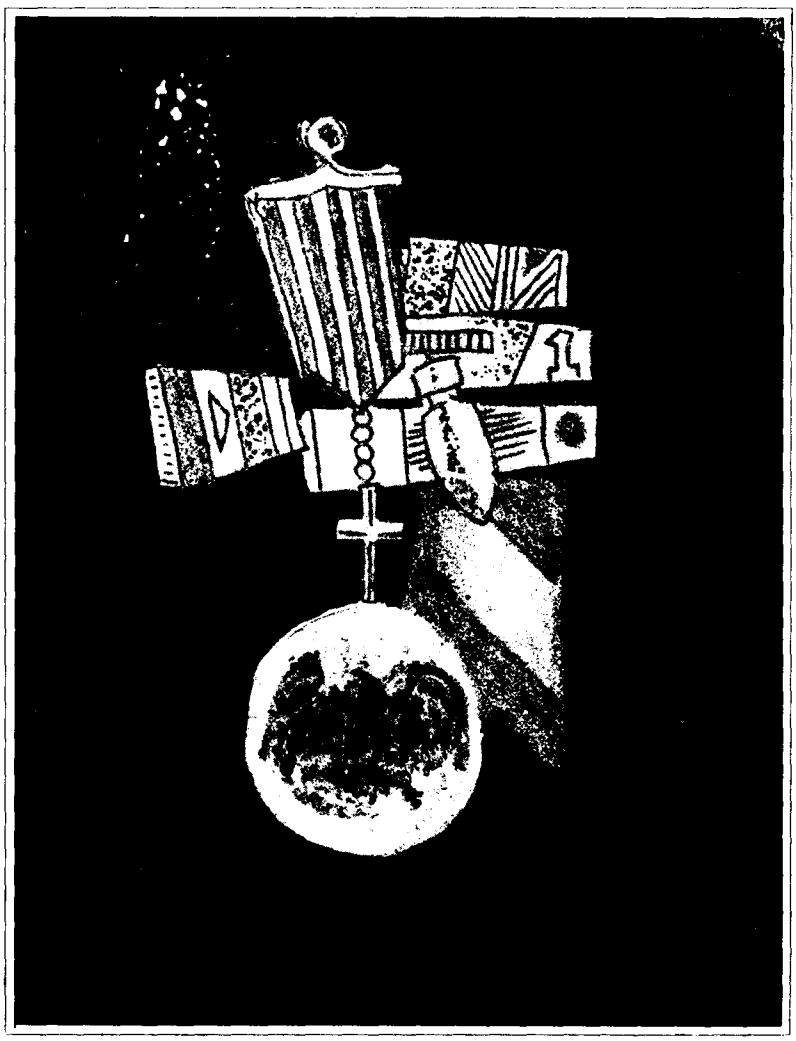

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end the civil war, to remove all foreign troops and to suppress corruption. His intention, essentially, was to return Laos to a neutralist position.

Under the new administration of John F. Kennedy, American policy changed, at least officially, in favor of a neutralist government. Phoumi's position having been weakened after several military fiascos, the three princes reached an agreement to establish a coalition government: Souvanna Phouma, having been assured that the U.S. was only interested in the neutralization of Laos, took office on June 24, 1962. By late July, an agreement had been signed in Geneva. A provisional government of national union had been created which was to consist of seven of Souvanna Phouma's neutralists, four Pathet Lao, four from Phoumi's group and four so-called "Right-wing Neutralists." Once again, integration of the right and left was to be achieved, including the armed forces. American and North Vietnamese forces were to be removed from the country.

The coalition, however, was short-lived. Fighting broke out between the neutralist forces. Several assassinations occurred, including those of two left-wing neutralists in Vientiane in April 1963. The Pathet Lao ministers left for the safety of Pathet Lao headquarters in Khang Khai, and within ten months following the Geneva Agreement, the coalition government had effectively broken up. (The tripartite government officially ended April 24, 1965.)

Souvanna was in the midst of talks with the Pathet Lao over a restoration of the coalition when on April 19, 1964, a group of younger right-wing officers in Vientiane, led by the chief of Phoumi's secret police, arrested him and took control of Vientiane. (The Western powers intervened to secure Souvanna's release.) The coup led to the final disintegration of the neutralist forces, some of whom joined neutralist leader Deuane and the Pathet Lao, with others going to the right. Having lost his base in the army, Souvanna Phouma now agreed to a remodeling of his government, which was unacceptable to the Pathet Lao. On May 17, 1964, he acquiesced in the beginning of U.S. air combat missions over Laos. From this point, many have doubted that Souvanna is his own master.

[CIA UBER ALLES]

BENEATH THE APPARENT CHAOS of coups and power plays over the last 15 years, one consistent pattern of political life in Laos stands out: the subversion by the CIA of the government administration, the domination of the army, and the control by U.S. AID of the entire cash economy of the country.

Although initial aid agreements with Laos were signed in 1950-51 when Laos was still part of the French Union, the first official U.S. aid agency in Laos was the Programs Evaluation Office (the first CIA front) set up in 1958-59. This was the original military aid and advisory group of the U.S. in Laos. It was transformed into the Military Assistance Advisory Group in 1961. By 1962, the U.S. had succeeded in building up a considerable Lao army, with U.S. officers down to the battalion level or even smaller units. After the Geneva Agreements were signed in 1962, all these organizations were consolidated under U.S. AID. (The distinction between CIA and AID has become meaningless with regard to operations and personnel. For example, although it is not generally known, the final authority for all CIA operations in northeastern Laos is under the actual command of Edgar "Pop" Buell, nominally AID chief of refugee operations.)

It is always difficult to assess power relations, which usually remain hidden behind formal structures, particularly when information is so scarce and operations so clandestine as in Laos. However, it seems that the CIA has created parallel rule by American "advisers," from top to bottom, both in the Laotian government administration and in the army. Final authority in the military, particularly in the Armée Clandestine, is completely in the hands of the CIA. The Armée Clandestine consists of many units scattered about the country, under the central control of the CIA. The CIA may frequently have difficulty in controlling a particular unit (Vang Pao is known to have embarked on risky military adventures against the advice of the CIA), but ultimate control rests with the Americans, who plan operations, control the supplies of equipment, and have advisers presumably in every unit.

The economic effects of this American intervention have been devastating. As early as 1959, the Senate Congressional Commission Report on aid to Laos stated that "The United States has supported the entire Lao military budget. . . . It is, in fact, virtually supporting the entire economy." In a country of 2.5 to 3 million people, where 90 per cent of the population is peasants living by subsistence farming (at most, 350,000 of the people are even in the cash economy), a few million dollars of aid can maintain the entire economy. Laos has had a consistent import-export deficit of as great as 20 to one (the U.S. effectively pays for at least one-half of the imports), and although before 1953 Laos was a rice producer, by 1955 it had to import 16,000 tons of rice from Thailand, and by 1966, 60,000 tons. (The Muong Sing and Nam Tha rice bowls in northwestern Laos alone could feed most of Laos, but these areas are under Pathet Lao control and American bombing makes large-scale production impossible.)

[WASHINGTON AND ITS FRIENDS]

THE IMPORT PROGRAM, supported by U.S. aid, has been a lucrative business for the Lao elite since the '50s. The Wall Street Journal wrote in April 1958: "There are from 200 to 300 well-known families in Laos which can secure the maximum of profits in a very great import program"; and more directly to the point: "The political leaders (of the Rightist faction) in Laos are given a number of privileges aimed at maintaining their friendly links with the United States."

This was accomplished when aid to Laos was $30 million, 70 to 80 per cent of which was for military expenditure. The increased aid since then has given the U.S. even more control over the economy. The total amount of U.S. aid disclosed was $480 million for the period 1955-62, and $344 million during 1963-65. Since then, the total AID budget has been about $300 million per year—about $60 million for "technical assistance," the rest classified military expenditures. (This does not include the cost of any U.S. operations, including bombing, which are based in

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Thailand or South Vietnam.)

But since the vast majority of the people live outside the cash economy, they cannot be so easily pacified. The peasants and the hill tribes have always been under the domination of the urban elite of Lao, which blocked French attempts at interference with their rule, and have been basically uncooperative with U.S. rural policies. By the time the Kennedy-McNamara pacification ("winning the hearts and minds of the people") program got under way in South Vietnam, the same methods were being applied in Laos. For the AID people were aware that "discontent" in the countryside was the "breeding ground" of communism. So the AID/RDD (Rural Development Division) has become the mediator between the elite (particulary the RLG) and the people. Whereas the RLG used to go on "mopping-up" operations in the countryside (UPI, October 22, 1959), the U.S. has since pushed a more subtle pacification program.

Since the early '60s, the U.S. has created several different modes of "rural development," from village clusters to refugee camps, under the "protection" and "control" of the RLG. (Air America, which flies food and other supplies to some of the more isolated villages, has been known to make "meat drops" of live water buffalo from a C-47 at a height of 200 feet.)

Although there are no reports of barbed wire encased concentration camps in Laos, as there are in Vietnam, it is important to realize that the wrenching of a peasant from his home comes only under the greatest pressure and is totally disorienting. By 1965, there were already between 250,000 and 430,000 refugees in Laos and at present the highest estimates are 600,000 to 700,000. As in Vietnam, people are "encouraged" to seek the protection of the strategic hamlets by bombing the villages in "enemy" territory.

Under the Nixon Administration, depopulation of the Pathet Lao-controlled territory has been stepped up. Virtually all the population in Pathet Lao areas now lives in caves, farming at night. The Pathet Lao, 4owever, have not been wiped out, and their control often extends into nominally RLG areas, where they have created parallel governmental structures which are deeply embedded in the political life of the villages.

Politics on the Royal Laotian Government side, however, has generally taken the form of struggles between a few prominent families who are ethnic Lao elite, a group which has no positive contact with the peasantry. The differences among Laotian groups on the RLG side, then, are not ones of principle, but rather of political power and its spoils–American aid. The Far Eastern Economic Review of June 6, 1968, gives an arresting picture of the situation: "The upper and middle classes have no desire to renounce the standard of living to which many of them, thanks to American aid, have rashly become accustomed. . . . For these *nouveaux riches* there is nothing to beat the status quo. As Prince Boun Oum–Prime Minister of a pro-American government in the Dulles era–is reported to have told his brother when the latter was grumbling that North Vietnamese infiltration had raised the cost of living: 'If we did not have the Viet Minh in our country we would not have a single dollar.' Another rich Lao is said to have remarked that it was far more profitable to have foreign powers quarreling around the country than to attempt any sort of work."

THE MOST IMPORTANT SPLIT within the elite is regional–north and south. The "rightists" were grouped mainly in the south; the neutralists, in the northern province of Vientiane. The Lao Issara movement came mainly from the north, and the pro-French forces, who accepted continued French dominance until independence, were from the south, where the French had always had the strongest support in colonial days. In any given region today, the army command is usually based on the most prominent family of the royal household. And in elections for the National Assembly, the prominent family of the region (or the army commander, if there is a difference) completely dominates.

Within this context, we can understand the change in U.S. strategy, from originally backing right-wing General Phoumi Nosavan, to abandoning him. Beginning with Dulles' determination to exterminate the Pathet Lao after the 1954 Geneva Agreements, the U.S. tried to establish in power the right wing under Phoumi Nosavan, and completely override the neutralists, who, under Souvanna Phouma, were willing to accept the integration of the Pathet Lao into the government. This strategy clearly violated the rules of the Lao political game by attempting to give complete dominance to the southern faction over the northern. It was doomed to failure, not only because the Pathet Lao could not be wiped out–particularly by Phoumi's totally incompetent army (or more likely they did not want to kill their brothers, whom they did not consider their enemies) and leadership–but because it could never win the support of the entire elite.

U.S. strategy was then adapted to Lao political realities, on the one hand by securing the economic dependence of the entire elite on U.S. aid, and on the other by moving to eliminate the right as a separate faction and to consolidate rule under Souvanna, who was acceptable to all regions. This could not be done, of course, until after 1962, when a separate Neutralist army that was not subject to U.S. control was eliminated. This U.S. strategy has been effective since 1965, attested to by the abortive coups by Phoumi Nosavan in 1965 and 1966. Regional differences and self-interest continue to be the stuff of Laotian politics.

Therefore, the U.S. has managed to create a politics of stalemate within the elite. On the one hand, the Laotian army is under U.S. control; on the other, the elite is almost completely dependent on U.S. aid, with one significant exception–the opium trade.

Contrary to some reports, it is likely that the CIA stays out of the opium trade. I have been told that one could walk into a government office and obtain military secrets in five minutes, but anyone asking about the opium business is a "dead man." It seems that the CIA turns its back and lets the Lao elite continue the opium trade unhindered. The reason for this is not difficult to guess: interference in the elite's traditional source of income would alienate the elite; the opium trade is undoubtedly their major source of income other than American aid (and may be much more lucrative for some). The importance of the opium trade is demonstrated by an incident which occurred in a northwestern province in 1967: about 500 people were killed and the RLG air force and ground troops, who normally never engage in combat, were uniquely aggressive in a battle

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over the hijacking of some *600 tons* of opium (three barges on the Mekong). This trade is international, supposedly involving the Burmese, the Chinese, and the Kuomintang from Taiwan, as well as the Laotians. Opium politics are probably the only relatively autonomous sphere of action for the Lao elite, and probably the major preoccupation for most of them.

[THE NIXON STRATEGY]

PREVIOUS TO THE CONSOLIDATION of Souvanna Phouma's rule, without Neutralist troops but with American support, the U.S. countered peace initiatives by Souvanna toward the Pathet Lao by supporting right-wing military coups. With the consolidation of American control over the military, however, and particularly the Meo under Vang Pao, the U.S. has not formally challenged the Souvanna government; it has merely launched aggressive military action which served the same purpose—undermining the potential peace settlements.

The United States consolidated Souvanna Phouma's rule in 1965-66, as the war in Vietnam was being escalated. The level of fighting apparently increased slowly while the U.S. was building up Vang Pao's army for forward actions. At the same time, the bombing turned more and more toward decimation of all Pathet Lao villages. Jacques deCornoy of *Le Monde* reported that by April 1968 all but two villages in Samneua province (a Pathet Lao stronghold in the northeast) had been completely destroyed. Roads and bridges were out and the people were living in caves.

Although major battles were fought in the 1967-68 period, the major escalation of the conflict has occurred under Nixon. After the limited bombing halt over North Vietnam on March 31, 1968, the U.S. intensified the bombing of Laos. In November and December of 1968, after the elections and the complete bombing halt of North Vietnam, the bombing was escalated four- and five-fold. By June of 1969 (not February of 1970 as Nixon stated), the U.S. was using B-52s against the Pathet Lao in northeastern Laos, at Muong Soui on the edge of the Plain of Jars (which is about 200 miles from the Ho Chi Minh Trail and has nothing to do with the interdicting of supplies to the NLF). The U.S. bombings were in response to a Pathet Lao retaliatory attack on a major U.S. base in Muong Soui. The Pathet Lao themselves had been responding to a major attack launched against Pathet Lao headquarters at Xieng Khouang in April, when the U.S. leveled the city and Vang Pao's troops walked into an evacuated town, claiming victory.

The Pathet Lao and North Vietnamese evacuated the Plain of Jars (traditionally Pathet Lao territory) in August, and the U.S. bombed it with B-52s after evacuating about 20,000 people from the Plain. (The refugee business is very profitable for the RLG generals, who pilfer from the AID refugee funds—the more refugees they create or "take," the more money they make.) By November the Pathet Lao were returning to the Plain of Jars, and were massively attacked by B-52s in February. But the Pathet Lao and North Vietnamese moved all the way across the Plain and attacked and overran the major American base at Sam Thong, just around a mountain from the formerly secret base at Long Cheng, which is the major base for Vang Pao's Armée Clandestine units, and the major U.S. base for all of Laos. At this writing, that base was still under siege (with massive U.S. air support for the Meos, the Thai mercenaries and the U.S. "advisers" who were trying to hold it). The U.S. has claimed victory (particularly for air power) in the retaking of Sam Thong, although it is more likely the Pathet Lao and North Vietnamese did not try to hold the base, as it would be useless and they would have suffered heavy losses from aerial bombardment. If Long Cheng falls —and the U.S. is determined that it will not—it will be a major blow to the Americans.

THE MORE THE U.S. KILLS the Pathet Lao and destroys their villages and fields, the more dependent they become upon the North Vietnamese, both for supplies and fighting forces. Probably most of the North Vietnamese activity in the country has been in response to the escalation of bombing in Laos (particularly in the northeast) since November of 1968. The U.S. has thus created the situation that has brought the North Vietnamese into Laos to defend their allies. And this presence of the North Vietnamese is used to justify the escalation of American activity.

U.S. policy has been to use the Laotian people like currency to buy time for Thailand (so they can "deal with insurgency" and generally consolidate control in Thailand), and to use Laos for fighting the war in Vietnam. The Pathet Lao have had to organize the people in order to survive and fight back. The U.S. bombing has forced some of the peasants to leave Pathet Lao areas. With nowhere to go, they are clustered along the Mekong on the Thai border, and can go no farther. Now the war is coming to them again, giving them and the rest of the peasantry no choice but to fight for survival.

The Laotian war has been a much "cleaner" operation for the U.S. than Vietnam because it has been vastly cheaper and far better planned and has not required American ground forces. The U.S. has successfully gotten Asians to kill Asians in Laos, and has been fighting a war of attrition *against the entire Laotian population.* The fate of Vang Pao and "Pop" Buell's Meos is a case in point: the Meo people are the losers. So far Vang Pao has sustained at least 25,000 losses (although more than half of his forces are Lao Theung, rather than Meo), and countless civilians have been killed or have died of disease. The Meo have been forced by the war from their homes in the hills and are moving into the intolerable valley climates along the Mekong. And they will be victims of Lao racism: they are hated by the Lao and will be very poorly treated by the RLG. The Meo who fought for the CIA (and there are many fighting for the Pathet Lao) are through. The Americans are willing, it seems, to depopulate Laos: the Laotian people, on both sides and in the middle (an increasingly untenable position), are killing each other--and the Americans are pulling the strings.

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Off The Pill?

"MEN, TAKE THIS PILL. WHILE YOU LISTEN TO THE HEARINGS, FEEL IT CIRCULATING THROUGH YOUR SYSTEM. CAUTION: IT MAY CAUSE CANCER, STROKE, DIABETES, BLOOD CLOTS, ETC., ETC."
–WASHINGTON, D.C.,
WOMEN'S LIBERATION LEAFLET

EARLY THIS YEAR, 30 MEMBERS of Washington Women's Liberation, carrying this leaflet, disrupted Senator Gaylord Nelson's hearings on the Pill. We went to the hearings to protest the alliance of drug companies, population control experts and the government, an alliance which we believe has given the Pill a clean bill of health at women's expense. The disruption was a particular shock to Senator Nelson–a longtime foe of the drug industry–who held the hearings for what he believed to be women's interests.

But congressional hearings–especially those dominated by male senators, doctors and drug researchers–could not possibly deal with women's terrible dilemma about the Pill: Should we take the Pill, chancing dangerous "side effects," or should we risk what doctors and population control experts portray as certain pregnancy?

For years women have depended on the Pill to feel safe from pregnancy–the spectre that haunts every close relationship with a man. After all, if a pregnancy occurs, it is the woman who bears the consequences. Even if a man is sympathetic and puts up the money for an abortion, it is still the woman who makes the anguished decision to destroy the child–or to face the social and economic consequences of being an unwed mother. With the Pill, women haven't had to worry.

Many women, even liberated women, believe the Pill started the sexual revolution; most see their sexual liberation at least partly tied to it. The Pill frees women from the contraceptive hassles they have always hated men for escaping. It guarantees spontaneity and the fulfillment of women's magazines' ideal of romantic love. We may laugh about the hearts and flowers, but it's in the culture.

TO SIT IN THE NELSON HEARINGS was a nightmare. Male witness after male witness droned on in technical language about the more than 50 serious, sometimes fatal, side-effects which *might* be caused by the Pill. The catch is that most researchers say their evidence doesn't show a *definite* cause-and-effect relationship between the side-effects and the Pill–yet. Women are left with enough evidence to scare them, but not enough to convince them to give up the miracle Pill and go back to the old methods.

While we pondered this choice, we listened to the most horrifying testimony of all. Dr. Roy Hertz, formerly of the National Institute of Health, told Senator Nelson he feared a Pill-caused cancer epidemic in the U.S. in the 1970s. Suddenly there was a new dimension. A woman might not escape such a catastrophe even if she had gone off the Pill immediately after the first terrifying reports of Pill side-effects came out.

Then we had to listen to the jokes. Senator Thomas MacIntyre (a Pill critic) asked a witness, Dr. Robert Kistner of the Harvard Medical School, "Could you distinguish for me the differences between a side-effect and a complication?" Dr. Kistner: "Yes. One takes in estrogen, one frequently becomes nauseated. Estrogen pulls in sodium and women don't excrete the fluid, and they may become edematous and blow up. There are side-effects, but if a woman takes estrogen and gets a blood clot and dies, that is a complication." (General laughter in the hearing room.)

Women are trapped. Ten years of Pill success stories have convinced many of us that neither the diaphragm, foam nor any other older method works. More statistics about the effectiveness of these methods can't do much about these fears, cultivated as they were by the drug companies, the medical profession and the population control movement. (The war of statistics goes on–drug companies claim the diaphragm is only 90% effective; doctors who are critics of the Pill say diaphragms are effective 98.6% of the time "in highly motivated women." That means if a woman is serious about it, a diaphragm works.)

Lately there has been much talk about the intra-uterine device (IUD) as an alternative to the Pill. Planned Parenthood clinics urge its use because of the side-effects resulting from the Pill. It is widely used in birth control clinics for poor women because population contol experts claim these women can't remember to take the Pill. But now stories of side-effects from the IUD are seeping out: many women cannot tolerate them and their use may result in bleeding or expulsion. Serious infections and perforations of the uterus are common, especially where health care is not good. Moreover, these same male doctors and population control experts who pushed the Pill are now switching their enthusiasm to the IUD. Who are women to believe?

MEAD JOHNSON, ONE OF THE big-time Pill manufacturers, puts out a little pastel brochure with their Pill, Oracon. Not much different from the other kindergarten junk put out by rival Pill companies, it whispers: "Unlike others available for the same purposes, this preparation follows the principles and system of Nature itself. Its actions closely resemble those of your natural menstrual pattern and delicate balance of your

by Judith Coburn

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normal body function." In fact, however, there are a great many things more "delicate" than the Pill. But nothing is more "natural" to us than the workings of the medical-industrial complex that spawned the Pill.

It all started in 1951 when family planning crusader Margaret Sanger, frustrated by the population control movement's failure to abort India's growth rate, offered the late Dr. Gregory Pincus a seed grant of $2500 to develop a birth control pill. Pincus teamed up with Dr. John Rock, a Catholic prominent in Planned Parenthood, and the two continued their research for G.D. Searle.

Last year, G.D. Searle, which controls 40% of the Pill market, had net earnings of $27 million on sales of $147 million—a profit of 18%. Seven other companies, Eli Lilly, Mead-Johnson, Ortho Pharmaceutical, Parke-Davis, Syntex, Upjohn and Wyeth, shared the rest of the $120 million Pill market. A leading customer for the Pill is the government: Last year AID bought $1,131,500 worth of pills at 16.75 cents per package from Wyeth and Syntex to pass out in birth control clinics abroad. The big money, however, is in the military: The Pentagon bought 1,755,642 packages of the Pill last year at prices ranging from 99 cents to $1.45 for a package of two month's worth of pills. By the Defense Supply Agency's own admission, only two of these purchases were made by competitive bids—a procedure required by law. The fact that the Pentagon is not buying the Pill at cost, and not buying from the lowest bidder, suggests a big business deal in the works.

The way news travels also shows who counts (the consumer is the last to know). In the early '60s, there was an effective blackout on research detailing adverse side-effects of the Pill. When the first embarrassing reports about deaths from blood clots among Pill users began to circulate, they were directed not at women, but at the financial complex whose profits were at stake. As one UCLA professor told Morton Mintz of the Washington Post, "I first learned about a fatality after a patient had taken Enovid—and there had been two in the area of Los Angeles—from my broker, who telephoned me one morning and told me the news had come in over the wires from New York."

THE FOOD AND DRUG Administration (FDA), the federal agency mandated to protect consumers from unsafe drugs, ruled the first Pill, Enovid, safe for contraceptive use in 1960 on the basis of "extensive tests" in Puerto Rico. These tests were later discovered to include only 132 women who had stayed on the Pill for a year or more, and only 66 who had taken it for more than two years. One pharmacologist, Dr. Louis Lasagna, sums up FDA's evidence: "Well, all they proved was that most women can take them without dropping dead." Not all. As it turned out, Searle researchers hadn't even investigated the deaths of three of their Puerto Rican subjects who were found to have died from blood clots.

It is hardly a revelation that the FDA sells out consumers, even when there are 8.5 million of them. The resignation in 1966 of FDA's top doctor, Joseph Sadusk, one of the early Pill pushers, to become a vice president of Parke Davis, can symbolize as well as anything the cozy relationship between industry and the government agencies assigned to regulate them. The medical-industrial complex operates like the military-industrial complex: the dream of every Pentagon general or civilian bureaucrat is to take a step up the status ladder into a job with a defense contractor.

It is also clear that FDA, even under the most independent and "progressive" of bureaucrats Senator Nelson could find, will never move significantly against the power or profits of the private drug companies. A healthy drug and medical care industry is as crucial to a healthy American economy as Big Oil. And so the entire safety-testing process for drugs prior to marketing is left to the drug manufacturers themselves. FDA's only role is collecting post-marketing reports of adverse effects of drugs sent in voluntarily by doctors and the drug companies. (Searle began hoarding its embarrassing records as far back as 1961; in less than a year after Enovid was marketed, Searle had a file of 132 cases of blood clots, including 11 deaths, which the company did not release until late 1962. But the FDA seems to lose records just as successfully: Jack Anderson, the syndicated columnist, reports that by October 1968 the agency had records from 1965-66 of over 9000 adverse reactions, gathering dust in a back room.)

Since 1962 the FDA has fathered a steady stream of government reports and "Dear Doctor" letters, each certifying the Pill as safe, but each crawling closer to an admission of serious side-effects. Until recently the drug companies (like the cigarette companies before them) have relied on calls for more research as a delaying tactic. The FDA and its parent agency, HEW, have contributed to the Pill's charmed life (and provided long-term insurance for the drug companies) by concentrating research money in R&D on new Pills, rather than in safety tests to prove conclusively whether or not the Pills women are now using are a danger to their health. (In 1969, out of a budget of $41,242,000 for population services and research, HEW spent only $380,000 for safety tests on the Pill.) With inadequate testing of its safety, drug companies can keep the Pill on the market while stalling off protest by calling for more and more research.

It is no accident that by the rules of science and the FDA's own laws it is impossible to prove conclusively (for industry and the FDA, if not for women) that the Pill is dangerous. For industry to be convinced, researchers would have to prove that the Pill specifically caused cancer in a *significant* percentage of cases. (Even then, if the cigarette companies are any example, they may not be convinced.) But this "scientific" proof is impossible, at least in a short enough time to protect thousands of women from serious injury or death. The event which seems most likely to spur FDA to take the Pill off the market or to issue a serious warning about its use, would be a miracle compound in the wings. (Some countries immediately put consumer's interests over those of drug manufacturers. On August 6, 1962, Norway withdrew the Pill from the market on the basis of a report in the British Medical Journal that blood clots had appeared in four pill-users in England. No adverse reactions to the Pill had been reported in Norway.)

To Women's Liberation, the research issue is like Catch 22. On the one hand, women see a way out of a current Pill nightmare in the development of a new Pill and a crash research effort on the safety of the present Pill. But on the other hand, it is clear that an all-out effort to find a new contraceptive medication by the same profit-oriented

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medical complex that produced and promoted the current Pill carries with it the same opportunities for exploitation and oppression.

The FDA does have its little methods of protecting consumers. For instance, when cyclamates were shown to cause cancer in one species of animal, the FDA took it off the market. However, when the Pill, which causes cancer in five species of animals, is involved, you've got a long way to go, baby.

"It's simple," the members of Women's Liberation told Dr. Egeberg in their sit-in. "It's profit over people."

"Why are you attacking *me*?" shot back the harried doctor. "I'm not an elected public official!"

THE PRESCRIPTION DRUG Task Force of HEW estimated in 1968 that American drug companies spend approximately $4500 per physician per year for promotion and advertising. The drug industry also supports the research and travel of a family of pro-Pill doctors like Dr. Rock and Dr. Connell, who do free flaking for the Pill. Occasionally drug companies even dip into their coffers to fund Planned Parenthood clinics, which have tax-free status.

The long arm of the drug companies also reaches far into the academic research scene. One tale should suffice: Medical World News reported in 1969 that a paper detailing a study which showed a sixfold increase in cancer among 40,000 Pill users was canceled for publication by a University of Chicago magazine. The piece was withdrawn after the researcher received $1,119,000 from the Ford Foundation (the largest supporter of population control besides Rockefeller). A university spokesman told Morton Mintz, a reporter for the Washington Post, "... the grants make possible a more comprehensive study and that consequently the findings set for publication were being reevaluated." Weighed down by all that gold, the results won't appear for years.

No one has logged how many man- (and woman-) hours lobbyists for the Pill manufacturers, the Population Crisis Committee and Planned Parenthood spend pushing the Pill with the media. When they can't squelch unfavorable stories or research reports, they counter with their own arguments.

The drug company detailmen pulled out the stops, though, when two books were published in 1969 chronicling the devastating effects of the Pill and the conspiracy that foisted them on women. Both books (by Morton Mintz and by Ladies Home Journal reporter Barbara Seaman) were the subject of strategy memos to drug company detailmen. A Searle "fact-sheet" sent to book review editors said of Mintz's book, "There is a danger that if certain statements from the book are given wide circulation without amplifying or qualifying data, literally *millions* of American women may be thrown into a panic regarding the safety of all oral contraceptives."

THE PURPOSE OF SENATOR Nelson's hearings was to find out whether drug companies and doctors are giving women a snow job about the Pill and whether, as a result, women can't make an informed judgment about using it. A Newsweek poll later summed up the matter: two-thirds of the women questioned said their doctors hadn't told them anything about serious long-term effects of the Pill.

The failure of doctors to explain the dangers of the Pill does not result from their own lack of information. That millions of healthy women take a potentially fatal drug is a logical consequence of the male-dominated medical profession's cavalier attitude toward women. Testimony by doctors at the hearings made this clear: patients are a bother, especially *women* patients (they're impossible). Senator Nelson's able assistant, Ben Gordon, read the following excerpt of testimony from a case in South Bend, Indiana, in which the husband of a young woman who died from a blood clot is suing the Pill manufacturer, G. D. Searle. (The witness is Dr. Robert Kistner, a prominent member of the Harvard Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, and a Searle researcher).

Counsel: "To what extent do you go over with your patients the information contained in the package insert (on Enovid)?"

Kistner: "I don't relate the package insert to the patient. The package insert is related to me."

Counsel: "Did you tell patients about reports that appeared in Searle literature regarding the occurrence of thrombo-embolic phenomena in takers of Enovid?"

Kistner: "Are you asking whether I initiated the conversation?"

Counsel: "Yes."

Kistner: "I told her as a reply on [her] initiation of the discussion. Well, as [my] initiation, no, I did not."

[Later] Counsel: "Why don't you tell patients there is a risk with oral contraceptives?"

Kistner: "Well, they might get, if you tell them they might have headaches, they will get headaches."

Counsel: "Well, if you told them they might get blood clots would that warning induce them to get blood clots?"

After Gordon read this exchange into the hearing record, Dr. Kistner burst out, "If you ask if I sit down and I take this out and I say 'Now I want you to know you may die of blood clotting or you may get hepatitis or you may get this, that or the other things' and besides, the only thing that has been said today as far as ipso facto evidence is that of blood clotting, then I would say 'no'. I don't believe it is good medical practice with any medication to go through the list of complications."

The Nettleship Company of Los Angeles, the country's second largest insurer of doctors against malpractice suits, has an easy way out for Dr. Kistner. On June 2, 1969, the company sent its 18,000 doctor-clients a special release form for their patients to sign before getting the Pill. The form says, "The prescription for contraceptive drugs on this date and for every refill thereafter is at my request. In making this request, I am aware that such drugs can cause serious reactions and complications, both known and unknown." Nettleship undoubtedly acted on the good faith of the 200 cases already pending by Pill users against doctors and Pill manufacturers.

IN MARCH, WOMEN FROM WITCH (Women's International Terrorist Conspiracy from Hell) hexed a population control panel at the annual meeting of the International Development Corporation in Washington. One Witch, portraying Uncle Sam, dispensed pills, yelling, "Free Pills. Free Pills." Other Witches pelted her with

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pills, shrieking, "Free food. Free abortions. Free rent." The demonstration was designed to show how the population control movement has never reflected women's real needs, and in many cases has served as an arm of American imperialist adventures overseas.

As with many of America's weapons of social control, the U.S. tested the Pill on poor women in the far reaches of the Empire. Early tests of Enovid were conducted in Puerto Rico and Haiti; a new contraceptive injection is now being tested on Thai peasant women. (At a small dinner at Washington's posh Jockey Club last fall a Ford Foundation population man was asked why Thai women were used as American women's guinea pigs. Sipping his Manhattan, he shrugged, "Well, they could hardly be worse off than they are now.") Searle researchers told reporters at the time of their Puerto Rican tests that they didn't follow up the three deaths in their test group because of local health conditions. The doctors claimed the tested women were so unhealthy anyway that three deaths during the test weren't unusual.

Planned Parenthood and the population control movement talk about the threat to the world's resources by overpopulation. World Bank President Robert McNamara, who knows his pacification business, sees the solution in insisting that a commitment to vigorous population control be a precondition for loans to Third World countries. The California welfare bureaucracy is considering cutting off child allowances for welfare recipients with more than two children. Since the U.S. consumes 50% of the world's resources, the use of population control to conserve world resources only makes sense when applied to the rich, like the Rockefellers and the Kennedys. The solution to scarcity of resources is redistribution. Limiting the numbers of the poor will neither solve the resource problem nor give them a decent standard of living.

IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE Nelson hearings, the issue has been reduced to haggling over the content of a proposed FDA warning to be put in Pill packages. When FDA Commissioner Dr. Charles Edwards announced a lengthy insert—the first warning in a prescription drug addressed to consumers rather than to doctors—Pill critics cheered. Edwards' grandstanding got him sent back to the bench by HEW Secretary Finch and the White House. (The longer warning had included *suspected* side-effects as well as *proven* effects, like blood clots.) Edwards' first draft was quickly reduced from 700 to 90 words "because," as Secretary Finch later told members of Women's Liberation, "we wouldn't want to put an undue burden on the medical profession."

In the end, however, Finch got his lines crossed a bit; the second version of the warning avoided listing side-effects by saying "oral contraceptives should be taken only under supervision of a physician." The AMA has been lobbying hard to strike out this phrase because doctors fear it implicates them in a woman's decision to take the Pill and it might lead to malpractice suits.

IN LATE MARCH, WASHINGTON Women's Liberation staged a sit-in in HEW Secretary Finch's office to establish the right of women to control their own medical and personal lives. A week before, word had gone out quietly from HEW that the Pill warning was to be watered down. Women had not been involved in the preparation of the original statement or in its gutting. "There were no politics to this," said Finch in a heated meeting with us. "We shortened the insert after consulting with population control experts, doctors and drug company representatives."

But the issue of the Pill goes far beyond the content of the FDA warning. As the Nelson hearings made clear, there is no immediate solution to women's birth control dilemma. Many of us believe that the best alternatives to the Pill, which we feel is unsafe, are existing forms of contraception backed up by free abortions. This will provide neither the convenience nor the psychological liberation of the Pill, but it will provide freedom from fear of unwanted pregnancy.

Secretary Finch and Senator Nelson have no position on abortion. Even though Hawaii, Maryland and New York have legalized abortion, the issue is still too controversial for most congressmen and public officials. Those states which have legalized abortions are those where the abortion underground had become as extensive as the health system itself and where the danger of death and financial exploitation had grown to scandalous proportions. (Even where abortion laws are repealed or liberalized, women must depend on male doctors—many of whom refuse—to perform the simple operation.)

Women's health needs are political rights. It is up to us to decide what form of contraceptive to use, and whether to have abortions. (In Washington, D. C., poor black women face a male abortion conspiracy like the Pill lobby. When a federal court struck down the local abortion law last fall, doctors and public officials at the city hospital refused to perform abortions. The private hospitals will perform them, but psychiatrists charge $125 for the required letter, and the operation costs $500. Women's Liberation sat in at the hospital and has filed a court suit to force the public hospitals to give free abortions.)

The solution is not to ban the Pill. The treatment and status of women as patients and consumers is inextricably tied up with the history and marketing of the Pill: if the Pill were to be removed from the market now, it would be the result of action by those same forces conspiring to make decisions for women.

Women themselves must decide whether or not to take the Pill, and whether or not to have children. If the population control movement is serious about limiting children, it should think about fighting to change society so that women can choose careers other than those of housewife and mother. For married women this means around-the-clock day-care centers at their place of work. For men it means sharing equally with women the responsibilities of children, household and contraception. For all women it means redefining their lives and medical needs through political struggle and their own personal liberation.

It means learning that the sexual revolution doesn't have much to do with the Pill.

Judith Coburn is a journalist and a member of Washington, D.C., Women's Liberation.

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Puerto Rico: Our Bacl

CITIZENS OF SAN JUAN were not surprised when they awakened one morning early this February to find that the Selective Service office, the local branch of General Electric and a portion of the El San Juan Hilton Hotel had all been bombed. Such attacks, carried out by a group calling itself Armed Commandos for Liberation (CAL), have become a fact of daily life in Puerto Rico. As the movement for independence from the U.S. has gained in momentum, more than a hundred bombings, the majority aimed at American corporations, have shaken the island over the past year alone. Of all the targets for this assault, one of the most obvious has been the popular image of Puerto Rico as the "happy commonwealth"—a sultry playground for American tourists and the showcase of U.S.-guided progress in the Caribbean. While the dust from the first pro-independence explosions was still settling, more and more Puerto Ricans, especially the young, were beginning to see how this tourbook rhetoric was used to conceal the bitter fact that their island was and is the only classic colony in the American experience.

by Michael Meyerson

Photo: Mike Shuster/LNS

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'ard Colony

[1]

FOR PUERTO RICANS, COLONIAL status is nothing new. They have spent the last five centuries under the rule of one Western country or another. Puerto Rico came close to achieving independence in the late 1800s, winning an autonomous constitution from Spain, only to lose it a year later when the island was "ceded" to the U.S. as part of the spoils of victory in the Spanish-American War. Ruled first by the U.S. military, then by presidential appointees and only recently by an elected governor, Puerto Ricans have had little power over the fate of their island; they were even made U.S. citizens over the objection of their one elected body.

Today the island legislature's powers are limited to traffic regulations and the like. Real political power resides in the U.S. House Committee on Insular Affairs and the Senate Committee on Territorial and Insular Affairs, both of which meet in Washington, D.C., some 1500 miles from San Juan. Appeals from Puerto Rican courts are decided in Boston and final jurisdiction rests with the U.S. Supreme Court.

U.S. federal agencies control the country's foreign relations, customs, immigration, post office system, communications, radio, television, commerce, transportation, maritime laws, military service, social security, banks, currency and defense - all of this without the people of Puerto Rico having a vote in U.S. elections.

The extent of U.S. military control of the country is particularly striking. One cannot drive five miles in any direction without running into an army base, nuclear site or tracking station. Green Berets were recently discovered in the famed El Yunque National Rain Forest, presumably using the island as a training ground.

The Pentagon controls 13 per cent of Puerto Rico's land and has five atomic bases, including Ramey Air Base. A major base for the Strategic Air Command, Ramey includes in its confines everything from guided missiles to radio jamming stations which prevent Radio Havana from reaching Puerto Rico and Santo Domingo. In addition to the major bases, there are about 100 medium and small military installations, training camps, and radar and radio stations.

IN THE LATE 1940S, PUERTO RICO became the target of Operation Bootstrap. Hailed as an economic "New Deal" for the island, Bootstrap bore the kind of name that encourages Americans to believe unquestioningly in their country's selfless generosity to other peoples. In truth, the new program was a textbook-perfect example of imperialism, guaranteeing tax-free investment to U.S. firms developing the island as a market for U.S. goods. (As the Wall Street Journal put it: "Two million potential customers live on Puerto Rico, but the hopeful industrial planners see it as the shopping center for the entire Caribbean population of 13 million.") While it fed America's sense of self-righteousness and brought profits to U.S. investors, Bootstrap left untouched the misery of the majority of Puerto Rico's 2.5 million inhabitants. In fact, by limiting the development of the island's economy and forcing continual dependence on the U.S., Bootstrap deepened the cycle of poverty in Puerto Rico.

Over one million *boriqueños* have left their native land for the *barrios* of East Harlem and South Bronx. That one-third of a nation would escape into exile to the slums of New York testifies to the living conditions in the Caribbean "paradise."

Four out of every five Puerto Rican families earn less than $3000 per year; one half receive less than $1000 annually. Oscar Lewis puts unemployment at 14 per cent; knowledgeable Puerto Ricans insist that a figure as high as 30 per cent is more realistic. That is a permanent condition twice as bad as the depths of the Great Depression in this country. Per capita income in Mississippi, our poorest state, was 81 per cent higher than in Puerto Rico in 1960. Whereas wages are a fraction of those on the mainland, the cost of living on the island is higher. Most statistics place island costs at 25 per cent higher than those in New York, Chicago or Boston.

Housing for most Puerto Ricans is abominable. In many a rural town, the only livable building is the town jail. Even government agencies consider 46 per cent of Puerto Rico's housing to be inadequate. Not atypical is the Los Chinos district of Ponce (Puerto Rico's second largest city), one of several slum areas, made up of thousands of one-room dirt-floor shacks inhabited by eight- and ten-member families. Groups of these families share a single outdoor toilet.

To most tourists, San Juan *is* Puerto Rico, and the Condado district (the strip of luxury hotels that accommodate tourists in increasing numbers each year) *is* San Juan. But within walking distance of the Caribe Hilton and the Flamboyan Hotel on the Condado are some of the worst slums in the Americas. Their picturesque names throw into bold relief the horror of their reality - La Perla (The Pearl), Los Bravos de Boston, etc. One slum, El Fangito, stretches for five miles along a rat-infested swamp which seeps with San Juan's sewage.

On a walk through Los Bravos de Boston, I met a woman standing outside what can only euphemistically be called a house. Made of bulletin board, sealed together with bailing wire and topped by a sheet of tin, the shack would have been blown over by a healthy gust of wind. The wretched home, six by six feet, housed the woman, her husband and two babies. As we spoke, an infant slept outside at our feet, his bed the basket of a rusty shopping cart. The mother, in a state of despair, had learned only that morning that the government was going to move the shack elsewhere that day, and there was no way to contact her husband, a construction worker, to tell him where to come when his day ended.

IF IT DOES LITTLE TO IMPROVE the lot of the poor, Bootstrap has by any standards been a bargain for investors. Offering U.S. firms cheap labor and tax "holidays" of 10 to 17 years, Bootstrap was hailed by Hubert Humphrey as the "miracle of the Caribbean."

(Continued on page 56)

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Back-of-the-Book

The Presidio 27

THE UNLAWFUL CONCERT: AN ACCOUNT OF THE PRESIDIO MUTINY CASE. *By Fred Gardner. Viking, $5.95.*

UNTIL A FEW MONTHS AGO I belonged to an Army Reserve unit which met for drills at San Francisco's Presidio, the large, evergreen-forested Army base that borders the Pacific Ocean and San Francisco Bay. I found that this country's class divisions split the Army, too: my fellow Reservists were mostly college students or young lawyers, businessmen and stockbrokers. Our headquarters was located 100 yards from the Presidio's stockade. Occasionally we saw signs that something was going on there: military policemen with riot helmets, floodlights on late at night, a roadblock, a new fence topped with barbed wire. But mostly, the stockade was another world—a world of men who hadn't had enough pull to dodge the draft and Vietnam the way we had—and we knew little of it.

ON OCTOBER 12, 1968, I went on an anti-war march through downtown San Francisco. Two days later, 27 prisoners from the Presidio Stockade stepped out from the morning roll call formation, sat down on the grass, and sang "We Shall Overcome," whose words they knew only from watching television. They presented a list of grievances; they were charged with mutiny.

For the 27, that sit-down was not a take-it-or-leave-it decision like the peace march. The stockade had three times as many prisoners as it was built for, there were bugs in the food, stopped-up plumbing spread human excrement on shower floors, a drunken guard sergeant had recently broken an inmate's finger, and three days earlier a mentally ill prisoner had been shot and killed when he tried to run away from a work gang. The prisoners had no choice but to do something.

Another member of my Army Reserve unit was Fred Gardner, a writer and editor who put his Army experience to use as the founder of the imaginative G.I. coffee house movement. His *The Unlawful Concert* is an account of the Presidio Mutiny. It is a good book: compact, swiftly paced, and full of carefully noted details (such as the Confederate flag tattoo on one mutineer's arm) which put the events before your eyes and also tell you something about the world the 27 came from. It is not written in the pseudo-fictional style of so many volumes about dramatic news events but in a low-keyed, inobtrusively documented way that is more honest and ultimately more moving. In all the plethora of print about the rebellious youth of the '60s, this is one of the few books to deal with the underside of that generation—those who turned radical not by listening to Joan Baez or reading Frantz Fanon, but by an urgent, life-and-death necessity you don't face on a college campus. And it is the only book I know of about any aspect of the simmering discontent within the American military.

THERE HAS BEEN NO Dreyfus or Sacco-Vanzetti case in our day, but a number of trials—Howard Levy, the Chicago Conspiracy, the Oakland Seven, the Presidio Mutiny—have helped polarize American public opinion about the war. Gardner's book focuses not on this polarization, but on the mutiny itself: its causes, and its effects on the men involved.

The Presidio Mutiny was a genuine insurgency. The peace movement became concerned about stockade conditions only after the Mutiny, not before. Not one of the 27 had been politically active before joining the Army. It was the overcrowding and brutality of the stockade that made them so, but only after they tried plenty of other things before the Mutiny: widespread use of any drugs men could get their hands on; prisoners trying to give each other hepatitis so they would be sent to the hospital; and dozens of suicide attempts, feigned and real, by every means, from hanging and wrist-slashing to drinking lye and metal polish.

Frustrations came to a climax when prisoner Richard Bunch, unarmed and deranged, was shot in the back and killed when he tried to run away. (Earlier, prisoners had seen Bunch try to walk through walls, and had heard him talk about suicide and ask a guard "Would you shoot me if I ran?") After the killing, there was an outburst of window-breaking and smashing of stockade furniture. Then came protest meetings to plan the sit-down. Most prisoners had a pathetic faith that if only they could express their grievances to the authorities, something would be done. The day of the killing, Richard Duncan, an inmate who later joined the Mutiny, took off his uniform and refused orders to put it back on. "I just couldn't wear it any more because it represented killing." He had never heard of conscientious objection.

IT IS DISMAYING THAT Viking Press waited nearly a year after the end of the Mutiny trials to publish this book, thus turning it from a weapon into a piece of history. My other main criticism of *The Unlawful Concert* is that it is sometimes hard to keep all the characters straight: the many different prosecution and defense lawyers at several trials, and the mutineers themselves. Nevertheless, Gardner has a real feeling for the background the prisoners came from, and a collective portrait of the 27 does emerge. Most were white working-class, half were from broken homes, only five had finished high school. Their average age was 19. Many had joined the Army as the only possible escape from poverty, having been misled by dishonest recruiters who promised them Army training they never got. Two were Vietnam veterans; several were from military families.

The book's most moving chapter is

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about the last of the several Mutiny trials, that of the 17 prisoners defended by radical attorney Terence Hallinan. "A striking solidarity existed among the men on trial. When one opened a new pack of cigarettes, he'd put it away with only ten left. Everything was shared. Each man who had a crucifix or a St. Christopher medal gave it away. Hayes made a wooden cross for Rupert; Rupert gave him a silver medallion with the assurance that it was 'very, very strong.' For many it was the first time in their lives they had had real, deep friendships." One prisoner who had escaped to Canada sent back a poem to another. Most important, the trial turned many of these children of the "silent majority" into radicals. Several began studying Marxism when they were finally sent to the Army prison at Ft. Leavenworth. And as they sat through the long trial, their families changed, too: The mother of one mutineer worked for the Air Force; at the beginning of the trial, she didn't even want to be seen with the "peace people" who helped the defense. But by the end she was writing letters defending Terence Hallinan to her former Air Force colleagues.

MORE THAN ONE GREAT empire has foundered upon an unwilling soldiery. Others have come close: over 100,000 French soldiers mutinied in 1917, refusing to enter the trenches, occupying villages and forests, and even stealing railway trains and trying to drive them from the front back to Paris. Marshal Pétain quashed the uprising with the classic carrot-and-stick: some soldiers were arbitrarily picked from the rebel regiments and shot; the whole French Army immediately got better food, better medical care and longer leaves. The men went back to war and the insane, useless slaughter continued.

In the U.S. Army today the carrots are already there: Rest and Recreation leaves in Australia or Hawaii, beer and marijuana, juke boxes and pool tables even at jungle outposts, and above all the fact that a soldier has to be in Vietnam only one year. The Presidio Mutiny trials were one of the first mass applications of the stick. There may be more. No realist, however, can hope for a revolt as big as the French one.

But even without another 1917, something important is happening to many U.S. soldiers today. Like the Presidio mutineers, they are coming out of the military changed men, as bitterly disillusioned about the United States as the members of their generation who grew up in the anti-war movement at home. *The Unlawful Concert* is a study of this. It is essential reading for anyone who wants to understand the workings of the most effective creator of revolutionaries this country has—the United States Army.

—ADAM HOCHSCHILD

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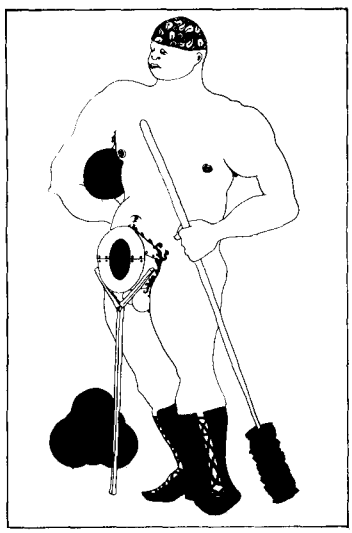

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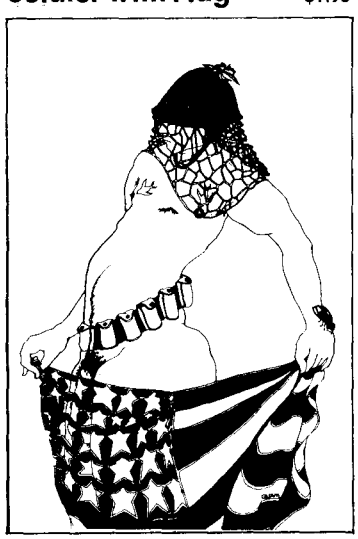

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The Liberation Music Orchestra

CHARLIE HADEN–LIBERATION MUSIC ORCHESTRA. *Impulse Recording AS 9183*

JAZZ MUSIC MAY HAVE put the sin in syncopation, as an early '20s magazine article announced. It may also once have represented artistic anarchy, a threat to spinster piano teachers and a haven for free-spirited instrumentalists. But whatever consternation jazz has caused within the music establishment over the years, it has had significantly little connection with any other kind of revolutionary spirit.

While black and white folk songs of the Depression era made frequent comment on the bad times, on the New Deal, on social progress and injustice, jazz instrumentalists were seldom involved in such commentary, or in any other. As a matter of fact, it was not until the Black Revolution of the past decade began to reclaim the Afro-American roots in blues and rhythmic freedom that jazz became even vaguely associated with goals other than artistic accomplishment, popular acceptance, and ultimately financial reward. In this light, the recent recording by the Liberation Music Orchestra led by bassist Charlie Haden is not only unusual and musically fascinating, but it also happens to stand alone in its field.

THE LIBERATION MUSIC Orchestra is a 13-piece ensemble, most of whose members are fairly well known to the avant-garde of jazz–performers like trombonist Roswell Rudd, cornetist Don Cherry, percussionists Paul Motian and Andrew Cyrille, and pianist-composer Carla Bley. In the context of the Orchestra these players and their colleagues are primarily strong ensemble voices, not soloists. Although the scoring of Haden and Miss Bley is rich and broad, the oldest of jazz traditions–ensemble improvisation–is the dominant sound on this recording.

Not only are the musical forms on this album "liberated," they are also based upon political revolutionary themes. All of side one is a grand and elegant tribute to the spirit of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade of American volunteers in the Spanish Civil War of the 1930s. Carla Bley has contributed brief introductory and closing themes for the four basic songs, and has arranged the material. Her writing has a distinctly complacent, American, smooth "swing" feeling at beginning and end–a perfect framework within which the gutty, desperate, revolutionary themes from the Spanish struggle can be displayed.

Because it is in every aspect a composition of the whole, not a collection–either of soloists or of a few casually joined pieces–the first side of this recording has not been understood or appreciated by most of the "jazz" writers and listeners. The disc's second side is spiritually just as tight, musically even more radical than the Spanish-tinged material. It is a provocative combination of three basic compositions joined loosely by a Bley interlude and climaxed by a dirge-like "We Shall Overcome" featuring full-ensemble improvisation, à la New Orleans funeral bands.

Haden's bass is the dominant line in his "Song for Che," which is in part an

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improvisation superimposed over a recording of "Hasta Siempre" by Carlos Puebla. Ornette Coleman's "War Orphans," a logical inclusion on this record, works itself around Carla Bley's piano, surging occasionally into powerful ensemble outbursts. "The Interlude," a 90-second break between the second and third segments of side two, has a Charles Mingus-style lope to it, with a touch of Kurt Weill.

BUT THE MAIN EVENT of the whole record is the climactic "Circus '68'69," a Haden composition involving two separate ensemble lines, tapes from the 1968 Democratic Convention, and the composer's astonishing string bass. Haden writes, "The idea for 'Circus '68'69' came to me one night while watching the Democratic National Convention . . . after the minority plank on Vietnam was defeated . . . the California and New York delegations spontaneously began to sing 'We Shall Overcome' in protest. Unable to gain control of the floor, the rostrum instructed the convention orchestra to drown out the singing. 'You're a Grand Old Flag' and 'Happy Days Are Here Again' could then be heard trying to stifle 'We Shall Overcome.' To me, this told the story, in music, of what was happening in our country politically."

The recorded six minutes of "Circus '68'69" are a magnificent musical presentation of Haden's written conception. The string bass, the strong melodic lines, the patriotic themes, the organ sounds, the eventual drowning of all sound in more sound, climaxed in some heavily Germanic chords and then the "We Shall Overcome" dirge . . . this is powerful stuff.

Haden's difficulty in completing this recording as he envisioned it, even with a relatively liberal recording company, indicates that the battle lines for free expression in music are somewhat to the left of the relatively minor scuffles between popular rock groups and recording executives over suggestive lyrics. The Liberation Music Orchestra, and specifically this recording, suggests the possibility that it will be the jazz community and not the rock bands that will bring together the hitherto divergent worlds of music and radical politics in the United States.

—PHILIP ELWOOD

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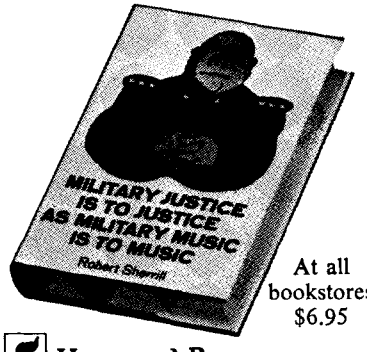

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PUERTO RICO

(Continued from page 51)

As the colonial government reports: "Manufacturers average 30 per cent on their investment—thanks to the productivity of Puerto Rico's three-quarter million willing, able workers. Profits in electronics run 10.8 times those of the mainland industry's average." Every dollar invested has brought a profit of 30 cents during the first year. U.S. investments in Puerto Rico are the highest—after Venezuela—in all of Latin America.

For every dollar produced in the island's industrial system, only 17 cents is left in Puerto Rico. Only Britain, Canada, Japan and West Germany import more U.S. goods. This island of less than three million people buys more from us than do Spain, Portugal, Austria, Ireland and the four Scandinavian nations combined.

Sugar and petroleum account for most of the country's industry. The sugar industry, controlled by three U.S. companies (the Central Aguirre Sugar Company, owned by the First National Bank of Boston; C. Brewer & Company; and the South Puerto Rico Sugar Company of New Jersey, the largest owner of cane plantations in the world), is a classroom model of neo-colonialism. It accounts for half the island's agricultural income—a fact determined not by the agricultural needs of the island but by the U.S. sugar quota. Impoverished Puerto Rican plantation workers chop the cane for tax-free U.S. companies, ship the raw product to the States where it is refined, packaged and taxed, and then buy back the finished product at exorbitant prices.

Only the petrochemical industry has seen a bigger growth in Puerto Rico, with heavy investments from every major U.S. petroleum corporation—Phillips, Union Carbide, Texaco, Standard, etc. Virtually ringing the Caribbean coast of the island in search of offshore oil, they have caused severe pollution in some of the best fishing waters in the world. This, together with the fact that the federal government prohibits Puerto Rico from maintaining its own fishing fleet, has resulted in the island's being forced to import 95 per cent of the fish it consumes.

Early in the 1950s, huge copper deposits were discovered in the interior. American Metal Climax and Kennicott Copper, operating through subsidiaries, moved in, taking exclusive rights to the deposits. Comparable in size to the largest deposits in this country, their ore value is higher than any in the United States. The deposits are worth at least $1.5 billion; American Metal Climax paid Puerto Rico just ten dollars for an exploration permit.

News of the deposits and of the negotiations between the two companies and the government was kept secret until the Pro-Independence Movement got word of the talks and began a public campaign. Through picketing, diplomatic protests and local organizing, the independentists have for four years successfully prevented the companies from starting production. Although the contract has not been signed yet, speculation is that with 64-year-old millionaire industrialist Luis Ferré as the new governor, the signing is imminent.

Washington propaganda has always held that Puerto Rico has no riches, that it needs the United States, hence independence is unreasonable. Now Japan has offered the country a better deal on its copper than have the U.S. companies, but its colonial position prohibits Puerto Rico from engaging in foreign trade. Undoubtedly, its oil, sugar, tobacco and coffee could also attract better prices if offered competitively. There seems no way to check or reverse the depletion of Puerto Rico's riches other than independence. The major argument against independence, aside from lack of natural wealth, has been the size of the country. But Puerto Rico has more people than the island nations of Cyprus and Jamaica; than eight Latin American countries, including Paraguay, Costa Rica and Panama; than some 32 member states of the United Nations, including Laos, Israel, Jordan, Albania and Lebanon.

[II]

LEADING THE DRIVE for independence from U.S. domination is the Movimiento Pro-Independencia of Puerto Rico (MPI). A prominently displayed painting dominates the offices of the MPI in San Juan. The picture, depicting the Ponce Massacre of March 1937 when police beat and killed nationalist demonstrators, was painted by Fran Cervoni, one of Puerto Rico's most important artists

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and a member of MPI's Political Commission. Only part of the painting remains as the artist rendered it, the canvas having been salvaged from the fire which destroyed the MPI headquarters in November 1965. Nobody one encounters has the slightest doubt that the arsonists were agents of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency.

Today, new fires are being set in Puerto Rico, but this time the flames are spreading in a different direction. Since New Year's Eve 1967, at least 75 fires aimed at North American properties have caused damage ranging in estimates from 25 to 75 million dollars. No one has been caught; no evidence has been found; no witnesses have come forth. But a group calling itself the Armed Commandos for Liberation (CAL) has taken credit for the action. To the chagrin of the propertied, no one can prove who belongs to CAL, although the press has attempted to tie the group to MPI. Police have even arrested local MPI leaders in connection with the bombings, but were forced to release them for lack of anything resembling evidence.

The island, already blanketed by CIA and FBI agents, has practically suffocated with the massive invasion of reinforcements from those two agencies. The Wackenhut Corporation, a Miami-based security firm, boosted its guard force by 40 per cent in less than a year, the bulk going to watch over U.S. holdings in Puerto Rico. Bargain Town, one of whose stores was fire-bombed, now has Burns Agency guards, equipped with fire masks and with fire-fighting equipment, both inside and outside its stores 24 hours a day. Still the bombings continue.

The goal, says CAL leader Alfonso Beal, is to make it so costly to stay in Puerto Rico that they leave. "We are in the first stage of operations," he says, "and in this phase we intend to cause $100 million worth of damage to U.S. concerns. Our idea is to inflict such heavy losses on these enterprises that the insurance companies will have to pay more money in indemnity than they have received in payment, thus upsetting the economy."

On September 23, 1968, the centenary of the Grito de Lares, the rebellion against Spanish colonialism, CAL issued a statement declaring the tourist strip of Condado a "zone of war" and asking

"Firebombs, guns, explosives, riots,

as long as they don't harm the people in any way, must and will be used by the people to liberate the schools."—J. H., age 15

"The most radicalizing influence on me was the Vietnam War...

I was in the seventh grade . . . later I also became sensitive to many of the other wrongs of America."—E. O., age 16

"I'm sort of freed sexually...

We see no reason why we should wait to have a piece of paper in our hands before experiencing the pleasure our bodies can give us."
—Miss J. T., age 17

"I felt after Chicago that there was no longer any hope

for the American electoral system . . . that real democracy and real justice lay with the radical movement."—D. R., age 18

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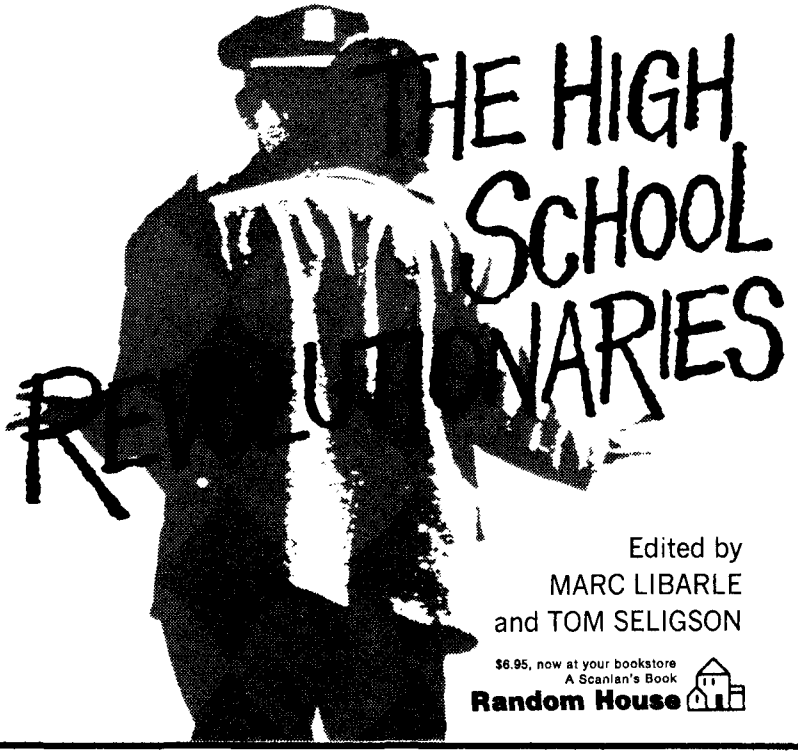

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Puerto Ricans to stay out, "especially in the evening hours." At an open-air ceremony commemorating the Grito de Lares that same afternoon, attended by some 20,000 *independentistas,* Juan Mari Bras, MPI general secretary, paid tribute to those who have begun to engage in "the highest form of struggle, armed struggle. The crowd took up the chant: "Fuego! Fuego! Fuego! Fire! Fire! Fire!"

The cadres of MPI are serious revolutionaries. They are dedicated, committed to the long-range struggle, have very few illusions about their "objective reality" and are terribly energetic. This is true both of the top leadership and of the activists.

In Aguadilla, a town 60 miles west of San Juan, in the northwest corner of the rectangular island, MPI has established the Jose de Diego Mission. There are some two dozen such central missions scattered throughout Puerto Rico supported by twice as many "patriotic missions." A central mission is one with its own headquarters, the facilities to print leaflets and the organization to distribute literature. Patriotic missions are groups of cadres in the surrounding towns who, working out of the central missions, strive to expand their organization to the point that they have strength enough to become central missions themselves.

The Aguadilla mission has, in addition to the familiar posters of Latin revolutionary heroes, the slogan in large black letters: "Diablos, No! No Iremos!" (Hell No, We Won't Go!). The town is located on the coast, and the shacks pile on top of one another, ascending to the peak of the hill overlooking the Atlantic. The slums get poorer as the landscape rises. At the top stands the pride of the Diego Mission—the first *zona libre* (free zone) of Puerto Rico. Made up of clusters of the worst shanties in Aguadilla, the zone's official name is Cerra Villa Nuevo. It has been organized by MPI, which now has the near-unanimous backing of the people there. Today, the police no longer venture into Cerra Villa Nuevo.

Many hundreds of families populate the free zone (the total population of Aguadilla is placed at around 50,000). The dirt paths that pass for roads are filled with mangy, limping dogs, pigs and goats. Due to the continuing expansion of U.S. military bases, tracking stations and radio intelligence centers, land is becoming scarce and the rural poor are being forced off their land and herded into already overcrowded city slums. Aguadilla is faced with massive unemployment and the figures extend far above the estimated 30 per cent for the whole of the island.

On the day I met him, Julio Alvarez, one of Cerra Villa Nuevo's most active MPI cadres, was on trial for burning the U.S. flag. In contrast to the severe penalties dealt out to Julio's contemporaries in the States for similar offenses, the young man only received a fine of $25. The courts apparently fear to tread on Puerto Rican national feeling.

Julio's shack in the free zone, perhaps a dozen feet square, contains a "kitchen with a mini-stove and an outdoor sink which one must stretch out of the window to reach. Boiling on the stove was a pot of yucca root, Julio's dinner. One wall features a half-dozen water colors painted by Julio. His bookshelf, a made-over produce crate, contains Dostoyevsky's *House of the Dead, The Idiot* and *The Brothers Karamazov;* some works of Cervantes; and books on Monet, Manet and Turner. Whatever else life denies him, Julio Alvarez's intellectual pursuits will continue. It is Julio and hundreds of his neighbors who comprise the population of the island's first *zona libre.*

WOMEN ARE CONSPICUOUSLY few in the movement's leadership, not an uncommon situation on the Latin continent. One of the exceptions is Lucila Andino, the 25-year-old director of the Carolina Mission. Her district stretches perhaps 25 miles east to Luquillo, the town surrounding Puerto Rico's most famous and luscious strip of beach. Included in the area is the village of Loiza Aldea.

Photo: Claridad/LNS

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which must be reached by raft. Loiza is populated almost entirely by black Puerto Ricans, and the origin of this ethnic make-up is a subject of constant speculation. Consensus generally holds that a slave ship capsized off Loiza's coast and the slaves that made it to shore settled in the area; it then became a haven for runaway slaves.

Lucila is one of two female mission directors of MPI; the second heads the organization in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico's fourth largest city. Perhaps a major reason for this lack of women cadres in the movement, aside from the obvious one of the general status of women in Puerto Rican society, is that much of the recent growth of MPI has come through its anti-draft activities. In 1966, a young worker named Sixto Alvelo became the colony's first draft resister. Within a year, MPI's newspaper *Claridad* printed a full-page advertisement listing the signatures of 1000 Puerto Rican youths who joined the Resistance. They stated their refusal to recognize what they consider to be a colonial draft, to serve in a foreign army, and they expressed their solidarity with the South Vietnam National Liberation Front. (In 1965, MPI had established a fraternal relationship with the NLF.) The ranks of the thousand have since been swelled much beyond that. Rarely does a day go by when a young resister is not arrested.

* * *

One of MPI's most encouraging recent developments is the success of FEPI, the high school independence movement. The high school organization serves not only to radicalize the hundreds of thousands of young people (half the island's population is under 25); it also provides the movement with a major wedge into the working class and peasantry.

Ponce is Governor Ferré's town and main base. In addition to his cement factories and his newspaper, *El Dia,* he has uncounted real estate holdings, foundries and much of the most costly land in the city. Yet here too the MPI is extremely active.

In the slums of Los Chinos, and in La Playa near the Caribbean, as throughout the city of Ponce, the MPI mission conducts nightly "ciné-meetings." In the twilight hours, portable bulletin boards filled with news, posters and photographs are set up at a given intersection. As night falls, speakers make a brief presentation of the movement's program and ask for support, and then projectors show films, imported from Cuba and Vietnam, projected onto the wall of a windowless building. As many as 600 neighbors come to these meetings, even though chances are good that they will be interrogated by the FBI the following day.

* * *

MPI INSISTS THAT SOCIAL justice and independence will not be achieved through the established electoral process, for whatever laws are passed in San Juan are subject to approval by Washington. At election time, the movement is actively engaged in promoting the boycott as a political weapon. There are the remnants still of the independentist electoral party, PIP, but it has pretty much deteriorated as MPI gains strength and as the reality of the colonial situation becomes ever more apparent. Little more than 40 per cent of the eligible voters are registered and of that number only perhaps half bother to cast their ballots.

While MPI is firm in its principled opposition to the colonial establishment, it maintains active supporters within the establishment. These are referred to as its *segundo nivel,* its second-level membership. In the political parties, the government and the press, the second level acts as a source of intelligence for MPI, letting it know of impending arrests or shady government dealings. In 1967, for example, *Claridad,* the movement's weekly paper, broke the story of the hitherto undisclosed discovery of copper in the center of the island.

It is the work in the copper areas and the slums, and similar organization among the petroleum workers, that has brought about the radicalization of MPI and the search for fundamental social change, say movement spokesmen. In April 1968, Juan Mari Bras announced that MPI would uphold the right of Puerto Rico to use any methods, including armed struggle, to achieve its independence. In the midst of a press campaign to determine who was behind the recent wave of bombings, and attempts to tie MPI to CAL, the announcement caused a sensation.

MPI CALLS ITSELF the "patriotic vanguard" of Puerto Rico. That is to say, it is the nationalist cause and urge that gives it life. But it is internationalist in outlook. Besides its pact of solidarity with the NLF in South Vietnam, the movement has representatives on the executive committees of the Organization of Solidarity with the Peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America, and the Latin American Students' Organization, both based in Havana.

As Mari Bras says, "Puerto Rico is battling against time in its struggle to save its nationhood." Only a crisis in the U.S. colonial system will force independence. The sort of crisis MPI speaks of in this regard is a massive unified demand by the island's people that makes their outright colonial status an embarrassment to the United States. The only force that can create the crisis, MPI believes, is the working class when it is organized. The development of workers' cadres is to be a main focus of the organization from now on.

The United States does not want a Puerto Rico free and independent to determine its own course. Nor, says Mari Bras, does it want a state with its own nationality. But the Yankees too see the possibility of a crisis developing in its system. So it attempts to destroy the Puerto Rican nationality through its military-economic-cultural penetration of the island. If the United States should succeed in its offensive, it could then grant Puerto Rico statehood at the point of crisis.

Meanwhile, the Movimiento Pro-Independencia organizes in the slums of the cities and the hovels of the countryside, among university and high school students, and in the growing industrial working class. They are, they say, a patriotic vanguard leading a national struggle of survival. While nationalism is the cause and self-reliance the urgent need, MPI is by no means unaware of the role of anti-imperialist North Americans. In fact, they see it as our responsibility to fight with them for independence. Ultimately, says one MPI leader, "What you do in the United States may well determine the fate of Puerto Rico's nationhood."

Michael Meyerson is a frequent contributor to RAMPARTS.

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Letters:

[THE INDIANS]

EDITORS: Peter Collier's article "The Red Man's Burden" in your February issue was one of the most moving and devastating stories to appear in RAMPARTS. I was particularly interested in the section dealing with atrocities that happen in Indian boarding schools. My neighbor once attended one of those BIA prisons for children and has tales about the school to equal those in the article.

The collusion between big business and the Department of Interior to rip off the last of the Indian lands was well-documented and points out, once again, that people are screwed not merely by bureaucratic ineptitude but by the systematic design of those in power. The only question in the minds of Tweedledum and Tweedledee (Udall and Hickel) seems to be "Why should valuable land be allowed to lie fallow simply because a few Indians are too drunk or too stupid to turn that land into money?"

While the occupation of Alcatraz has once again brought the plight of the American Indian to the attention of the fickle public and thus may have resulted in a lessening of some of the most excessive acts against the Indians, such a move seems, at best, a stopgap. A public conscience that can accept physical genocide in Vietnam can accept cultural genocide at home.

The Red Man's Burden is the same as that of the Black Man, the Yellow Man or the White Man who wants a humane society. The burden is a system based on exploitation and profit. To get rid of the burden we must get rid of the system.

Power to the Indians! Power to the People!

SCOTT ARANSON
Ann Arbor, Michigan

[OPUS DEI]

EDITORS: Yvon Le Vaillant's article on Spain's governing "Opus Dei" [RAMPARTS, February 1970] was somewhat misleading. The real coup d'état of 1969 was staged in October by the Opus itself as it swiftly and effectively stripped General Franco of his last remaining power. It was not the triumph, however, of a zealous band of devout enterprising Catholics as much as a total victory for International Capitalism, which, with Opus as its local agent, has now institutionalized its domination of the government, economy and popular culture of Spain. Political activists in Barcelona are saying that Spain has now entered the Post-Franco era. The implications of this change are far-reaching. The values of the past are being expansively and profitably erased from the hearts and minds of the people and the streets and gardens of the cities. Television and billboards relentlessly provoke consumption. One by one, big corporations and even bigger banks settle in to get while the getting is good. Now the slogan for Franco's tourism-based economy, "Spain is Different," is being hastily converted to a brisk "Spain is the Same" to reflect the International thrust of the new government. And the streets of Barcelona do look deceptively more "European": sharper shops, handsomer cars, Marcuse and Voltaire on the newsstands. But the ploy is obvious: the Opus men stand to gain in at least three major ways by permitting the many little liberties. First, internal dissent is diluted and made more difficult to justify to the masses. Second, the country looks more attractive to the international business community and, most desirably, to the European Common Market bosses. And third, the new material values which serve to enrich the ruling powers are enhanced.

But meanwhile, all of the convenient structures of Franco's fascism are still intact. Labor unions, political dissent and popular organizing, secular or from clergy, are not tolerated to any degree. The forces of repression remain as strong and as poised as ever.

I would have hoped that a RAMPARTS article could have emphasized that the substitution of the Opus Dei-International Capitalists for the homegrown falange of Francisco Franco signifies yet another setback for the people in their struggle for liberation from fascism.

RICK NEWBERGER
Evanston, Illinois
[*We thought it did.*—The Editors]

[PANTHERS]

EDITORS: America! America! why are the Black Panthers being systematically murdered and jailed, while white racist groups such as the Ku Klux Klan and American Nazi Party are allowed to intimidate and murder throughout the nation? Our judicial system is a mockery to human justice. Murderers of civil rights activists have been (and are still being) acquitted, while Panthers are being murdered in their sleep, or, if lucky, herded off to jail to rot in imposed silence. Now I know how the Jewish citizen of Hitler's era must have felt when learning that his Jewish neighbor had been dragged off to Dachau the previous night.

White America is less terrified over proposed tactics by the Panthers than it is over the fact that black men now openly abhor and detest crimes upon their blackness and are struggling to shatter the psychological chains of defeatism. Moreover, the white man has historically feared black success. With a subtle egomania, whites hate black progress or its potentiality, inasmuch as it annihilates all the archaic ideas and social naivete concerning white superiority/black inferiority concepts. Racism is a quality of "ego fulfillment."

Americans hated Dr. Martin Luther King just as much as—in fact, more than—they hate Eldridge Cleaver, because King represented the contradiction between American democracy and white racism. And like King, Cleaver will be murdered by America because he has a sense of black manhood and selfhood.

The land of democracy is becoming a fascist nation. Big-city Gestapo patrolling the ghetto proletariat is no different from the southern "head-beaters" who indiscreetly employ police dog and firehose tactics against any conscious black person moving for his rights as a human being.

JAMES W. BROWN
APO SF 96374

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100,000 signed this Declaration during the JOHNSON Administration.
NIXON is allowing death and destruction to continue and to increase.
Pressure and action against the war are needed.

Individuals Against the Crime of Silence

A Declaration To Our Fellow Citizens Of The United States, To The Peoples Of The World, And To Future Generations:

1 We are appalled and angered by the conduct of our country in Vietnam.

2 In the name of liberty, we have unleashed the awesome arsenal of the greatest military power in the world upon a small agricultural nation, killing, burning and mutilating its people. In the name of peace, we are creating a desert. In the name of security, we are inviting world conflagration.

3 We, the signers of this declaration, believe this war to be immoral. We believe it to be illegal. We must oppose it.

4 At Nuremberg, after World War II, we tried, convicted and executed men for the crime of OBEYING their government, when that government demanded of them crimes against humanity. Millions more, who were not tried, were still guilty of THE CRIME OF SILENCE.

5 We have a commitment to the laws and principles we carefully forged in the AMERICAN CONSTITUTION, at the NUREMBERG TRIALS, and in the UNITED NATIONS CHARTER. And our own deep democratic traditions and our dedication to the ideal of human decency among men demand that we speak out.

We Therefore **wish to declare our names to the office of the Secretary General of the United Nations, both as permanent witness to our opposition to the war in Vietnam and as a demonstration that the conscience of America is not dead.**

On September 23, 1965, a Memorandum of Law was incorporated in the Congressional Record of the 89th Congress of the United States of America, in which leading American attorneys, after careful analysis of our position and actions in the Vietnam War, came to the conclusion that the U.S. is violating the following accords: The Charter of the United Nations, The Geneva Accords of 1954, the United States Constitution.

To Protest — To Object — To Dissent has long been an American tradition. The following are a few among the many who have signed this declaration to be on permanent record.

ABE AJAY
JAMES BALDWIN
(FATHER) J. E. BAMBERGER, M.D., OCSO
DANIEL BERRIGAN, S.J.
REV. PHILLIP BERRIGAN, S.S.J.
RAY BRADBURY
ROBERT McAFFEE BROWN
REV. WILLIAM H. DU BAY
JAMES FARMER
W. H. FERRY
DR. JEROME D. FRANK
REV. STEPHEN H. FRITCHMAN
BEN GAZZARA
DR. FRED GOLDSTEIN
NAOMI L. GOLDSTEIN
DR. RALPH R. GREENSON
PROF. ABRAHAM J. HESCHEL
BRIG. GENERAL H. B. HESTER, RET.
DR. STANLEY HOFFMAN
TERESSA B. HOFFMAN
CHARLES H. HUBBEL
SANDER L. JOHNSON, ESQ.
PROF. DONALD KALISH
EDWARD M. KEATING
PHIL KERBY
RING LARDNER, JR.
RABBI RICHARD N. LEVY
LOUIS LICHT, ESQ.
DR. ROBERT E. LITMAN
VICTOR LUDWIG
HERBERT D. MAGIDSON
SHIRLEY MAGIDSON
NORMAN MAILER
THOMAS MERTON
SIDNEY MEYER
EASON MONROE
PROF. HANS J. MORGENTHAU
HENRY E. NILES
DR. MARK F. ORFIRER
AVA HELEN PAULING
DR. LINUS PAULING
BISHOP JAMES A. PIKE
RICHARD M. POWELL
CARL REINER
JANICE RULE
ROBERT RYAN
DAVID SCHOENBRUN
LORRY SHERMAN
PROF. ROBERT SIMMONS
DR. BENJAMIN SPOCK
FRED H. STEINMETZ, ESQ.
DR. NORMAN TABACHNICK
D. IAN THIERMANN
BRYNA IVENS UNTERMEYER
LOUIS UNTERMEYER
DICK VAN DYKE
ROBERT VAUGHN
DR. MAURICE N. WALSH
DR. HARVEY WHEELER
A. L. WIRIN, ESQ.

I wish to sign my name to the above Declaration to the United Nations and want to go on record with this Declaration of the Individuals Against the Crime of Silence.

signature _____
For clarity, also print your name after your signature

address _____ date _____

city _____ state _____ zip _____

Sign, complete and mail to P.O. Box 69960, Los Angeles, Calif. 90069. The office of the Individuals Against the Crime of Silence will then forward the information to the United Nations.

Should you also wish to support additional publishings and communications, send $1 or more in cash or by check made payable to Individuals Against the Crime of Silence. . . . This donation entitles you to the lapel emblem, the wallet-size registration card and four personalized letter replicas of the Declaration for you to individually send on to the President and your U.S. senators and congressman. Money is needed to speed our progress.

The strength of our numbers will regularly and effectively be made known. Your signature does have power.

TEAR OUT ALONG THE DOTTED LINE AND MAIL

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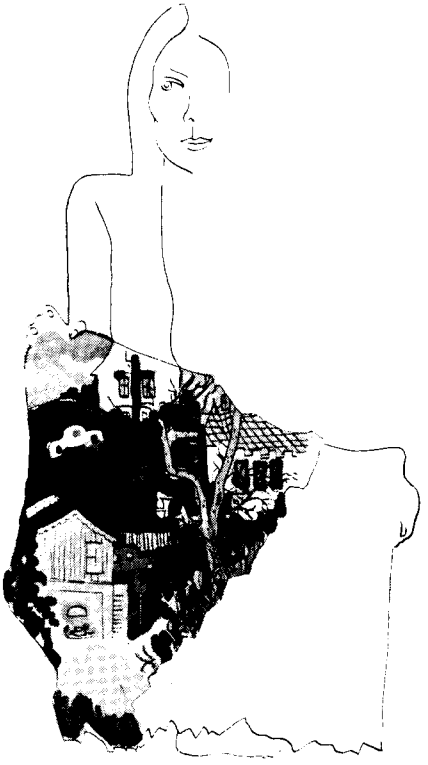

Joni Mitchell's new album will mean more to some than to others.

Amy Foster, twenty-three years old and quietly beautiful, was sitting in her orange inflatable chair listening to Neil Young's second album and toying indifferently with the enormous antique ring on the index finger of her left hand. Mostly she was trying with the usual lack of success to avoid lapsing into that state of bored listlessness she'd found herself in so frequently of late as she waited for the Country Store delivery boy to arrive with her groceries and RIT, with which she planned to pass the evening by tie-dyeing some curtains for her '64 Chevy camper.

To say simply that she had been under the weather these past few days would have been to wildly understate the case. Indeed, ever since she had been told on Sunday night by a mutual acquaintance that David, who had left her a month ago in favor of some chick he had met at the Jeans West shop he managed, had up and married, Amy had been more than a little inclined to chucking everything in the back of her camper and taking off for indefinite points north to try to get her head back together. Today, of course, was no exception: "I'm incredibly down, man," she observed to herself as the turntable's arm lifted quietly off "Down By The River" and someone began knocking impatiently at the back door.

It was the delivery boy. After depositing her groceries on the kitchen table he stopped to admire the Van Morrison collage she had made, so Amy offered him some tea. This he accepted with a gracious and endearing toothy smile.

As they sat in the living room sipping Constant Comment with orange honey mixed in and listening to side one of *Deja Vu* he, whose name turned out to be Barry, took out a concise little joint, lit it and took a couple of polite hits, and passed it over to Amy. "Mellow," she responded, her spirits lifting slightly.

"Hey, you really have a far-out system here," Barry commented in reference to her stereo set-up as she handed the joint back. "Do you think we could listen to some of Joni Mitchell's new album on it," for he had purchased *Ladies of the Canyon* at the Music Hall just that afternoon. "Hey, groovy," agreed Amy, who had not even realized that the album had been released.

So Barry brought it in and placed it on the turntable. By the time "For Free" was over they were both quite mellow indeed. As much as they downed her by reminding her all too vividly of her now-irrevocably-consummated relationship with David, "Willy" and "Conversation" were somehow reassuring—there was someone else, even another canyon lady, who really knew. Amy began to feel a little better.

By the time "Circle Game" had finished, Amy was no longer dejectedly contemplating splitting for Oregon. In fact, she could scarcely wait for the sun to get through setting so she could drive up to the top of Lookout and watch Los Angeles twinkle beneath the indigo April sky.

Joni Mitchell's *Ladies of the Canyon*
On Reprise albums and tapes

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